

Inspection of William Rhodes Primary and Nursery School

Hunloke Avenue, Boythorpe, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S40 2NR

Inspection dates:	25 and 26 February 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Jenny Wilkes. This school is part of Embark multi-academy trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Matthew Crawford, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David King.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school has high expectations of the achievement and behaviour of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Well-established routines from early years to Year 6 enable pupils to meet these expectations. As a result, pupils are able to focus on their learning and most achieve well. Pupils value the rewards they earn for doing their best.

Pupils are happy and enjoy attending this school. They talk with enthusiasm about school life. Pupils' relationships with each other and adults are respectful and polite. High-quality pastoral support is available for pupils or parents to discuss any concerns they may have. This includes help for pupils in managing their feelings.

The school prioritises the personal development of pupils. Pupils develop as individuals through leadership roles, such as members of the school parliament and reading ambassadors. They access a wide range of extra-curricular activities and community projects. Pupils develop their skills and interests in sports, including boxing, archery and football. They also learn to play a brass instrument in Year 4.

Parents and carers value the work that the school does. A typical comment from a parent is, 'Everyone within the school is so invested in my child's success, every victory is celebrated.'

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

The school has designed a curriculum that is ambitious for pupils, including those with SEND. The school has ensured that the knowledge it wants pupils to learn has been logically sequenced so that pupils revisit and embed key concepts over time. For example, in Year 1, pupils learn about Chesterfield and the physical geography of the local area. By Year 3, pupils make comparisons between their local area and Pompeii. This helps them to answer questions about why people settle in certain places and how cities grow.

Teachers introduce new learning effectively. They focus on ensuring that pupils learn and use new vocabulary accurately. Pupils revisit what they have learned through regular memory tasks. This helps pupils know more and remember more. Teachers check to find out what pupils know. In reading and mathematics, for example, teachers identify pupils who have gaps in their learning. These pupils receive extra support that helps them to improve.

The school identifies pupils with SEND promptly. The school seeks appropriate advice from external agencies to support pupils' specific needs. Pupils with SEND access the full curriculum. Plans to support their learning are clear. However, teachers do not use the plans consistently to adapt their teaching to meet these pupils' needs. Consequently, pupils with SEND do not always achieve as well as they could.

Reading is a priority at this school. Staff are trained to teach the systematic phonics programme to pupils at an early stage of reading. Daily phonics sessions are highly

structured. Pupils who find reading difficult receive the help and support they need to catch up quickly. A range of carefully chosen, engaging texts in their English lessons helps pupils to develop their knowledge of different genres of fiction, as well as non-fiction. As they move through the school, pupils enjoy reading, with most becoming fluent and confident readers.

Children in early years have frequent opportunities to play and learn through well-planned activities. Through these activities, children learn to be curious, resilient and sociable. The well sequenced early years curriculum prepares children for their next phase of learning. There is a sharp focus on developing children's communication and language.

The school teaches pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour. As a result, they behave well and learning is rarely disrupted. Staff build relationships with pupils and their families. They work closely with families to promote regular attendance. There is rigour in the way that the school and trust work together to manage attendance to make their expectations clear to all parents. This is having a positive impact. Despite this, some pupils are absent from school too often. This means they miss important learning.

The curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to experience the world beyond the local community. Residential visits widen pupils' horizons and develop their character. Pupils understand British values. They learn to respect and celebrate differences in others, as well as learning about different cultures and religions. Pupils learn about physical and emotional health and age-appropriate relationships. They also raise money for charities and the school.

Governors and members of the trust have a secure understanding of the school and hold leaders to account effectively. Their evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement is insightful. Governors and members of the trust fulfil their statutory responsibilities. Staff say leaders consider their workload and well-being. They are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. As a result, they do not benefit from the curriculum and wider experiences offered by the school. The school should ensure that pupils who require it receive the necessary support to enable them to attend regularly.
- Learning is not adapted well enough to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. As a result, these pupils do not learn as well as they should. The trust must ensure that learning is suitably adapted so that all groups of pupils progress through the curriculum well.

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	148944
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10347710
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	169
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David King
CEO of the trust	Matthew Crawford
Headteacher	Jenny Wilkes
Website	www.williamrhodes.derbyshire.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- William Rhodes Primary and Nursery School converted to become an academy and joined Embark multi-academy trust in March 2022. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged as requires improvement for overall effectiveness.
- The headteacher took up their post in September 2023.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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 lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector met with the CEO of the trust, representatives from the board of trustees, members of the trust and local governors.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They also held meetings with leaders responsible for behaviour, attendance, reading, personal development and SEND.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, geography and science. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, looked at samples of pupils' work and spoke to pupils about their learning.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 6 reading to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors considered pupils' behaviour at various times of day, including in lessons, around the school site and at lunchtime.
- The lead inspector took account of the responses from parents to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also took into consideration the online Ofsted staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Stephen Long, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

George Huthart

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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