

Wootton Bassett Infants' School



Equality Information 2023-2024

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Introduction

Wootton Bassett Infants School is committed to ensuring that everyone is treated fairly and with respect as we want our school to be a safe and inspiring learning environment for **all** our pupils. This school recognises that people have different needs, and we understand that treating people equally does not always involve treating everyone the same. The school creates inclusive processes and practices where the varying needs of individuals can be identified and met.

This document explains how we show our commitment to equalityⁱ for our school population and how we plan to tackle inequalities that may impact at school.

Celebrating our Successes

- *We have revised the assembly programme, behaviour policy and PSHE scheme which has increased the understanding and confidence of pupils to recognise, address and report bullying - including the use of racist, anti-LGBT and disability-related discriminatory language.*
- *The revised curriculum has increased pupils' knowledge and understanding of the different faiths and beliefs in Britain today and supported individual pupils in the development of their sense of identity and belonging.*
- *We have embarked on and are implementing the Affordable school strategy which ensures all pupils have the opportunity to participate, learn and thrive with the aim of building a universal, equitable approach through the lens of affordability.*

Priorities for the Year 2024/25

Sex (Gender) - Boys and Girls

The underachievement of boys compared with girls historically is a recognised issue. At Wootton Bassett Infants the children who started in reception in 2023-24 have highlighted this as an issue for our school. 60% of boys (9 out of 15) in the cohort did not achieve GLOD with particular issues in PSED, communication and language and literacy. However, other barriers to learning have been identified for this cohort and the boys in particular, and these will be highlighted below.

This trend was not apparent by the end of KS1 as internal data for combined Reading/Writing/Maths showed that the gap was small with only 4 boys out of the cohort (52) not reaching the expected standard in all three areas. This school adopted a validated phonics scheme and decodable books in 2022 that tackle reading issues and helps children become more successful readers and writers. Three children did not reach the standard in the PSC by the end of KS1 and only one of these was a boy who started at the school in Term 3. The School Improvement Plan for 2023-24 placed an emphasis on early language skills as this had been highlighted as an issue for the cohort that started in September. School knows that interventions targeting early language have potential for improving outcomes for all children. Boys benefit from such interventions because they are more likely to have these problems to begin with. Designated staff to develop speaking and listening skills have been successful as well as a focus on language through daily classroom practice and the introduction of Talk through Stories in EYFS has led

to good progress in this area for all children. We also adopted a mastering number programme for the early years in 2022 to develop number fluency with the first full year of implementation completed in 2024. Maths results for the EYFS cohort have improved considerably (85% achieving GLOD in maths). Maths continues to be a maintenance priority on the SIP along with phonics and the continued focus on language as this is a recognised area of concern across the country and evident within our cohort.

Minority Ethnic Pupils

LA and national attainment data provide a valuable source of information to identify potential areas of concern and while these are not yet available it is well established that while many minority ethnic groups of pupils do well, there are also groups where underachievement persists.

Very small numbers of minority ethnic pupils in Wootton Bassett Infants School mean that individual pupil-targeted approaches must be used to identify both underachievement, and to celebrate successes. This has contributed to 50% of EAL pupils making average progress in Reading/Writing/Maths at the end of KS1 compared with 69 % of all pupils. (internal data)

All Black Pupils Major Ethnic Monitoring Category

The last available LA data for Wiltshire highlighted concerns about the attainment of the All Black Pupils major ethnic monitoring category and for the Black Caribbean minor ethnic monitoring category.ⁱⁱ Attainment for Black Caribbean pupils at that time was lower than the attainment of White British pupils and a lower proportion of Wiltshire pupils in the All Black Pupil major ethnic monitoring category achieved a Higher Standard in the Reading, Writing and Maths assessments compared with White British pupils.

When and as appropriate Wootton Bassett Infants School works closely with the LA to implement proven strategies to raise attainment during the primary school years.

Gypsy/Roma/Traveller Pupils

Gypsy/Roma and Irish Traveller pupils are the lowest achieving ethnic groups.

In Wiltshire, the last available figures (2019) showed that just under 18% of Gypsy/Roma pupils achieved the expected standard.ⁱⁱ Small numbers mean the attainment of Wiltshire Traveller pupils is not being published. While the overwhelming majority of Wiltshire Gypsy/Roma/Traveller pupils choose to attend primary school until the end of Year 6, it remains a concern that a majority of Wiltshire Gypsy and Traveller families choose to home educate their children during the secondary school years.ⁱⁱ

A House of Commons Briefing Paper (September 2017) reported that education issues for Gypsies and Travellers include prejudice, discrimination, and discriminatory attitudes. The issues also include the

schools' responses to discrimination, and high levels of self-exclusion from mainstream education because of discrimination.^{iv}

National research published in 2018 suggests there has been a significant increase in the number of Gypsy/Roma and Irish Traveller children who are being cared for by local councils. The data shows an increase of 900% for the numbers of Gypsy/Roma children and 400% for Irish Traveller children since 2009. One of the reasons suggested is that Gypsy/Roma and Traveller families are less likely to be offered or to access early help and support and this is important as it is an area in which schools can help.

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English as an Additional Language

In Wiltshire schools, the same proportion of pupils for whom English is known to be their first language and those for whom it is an additional language achieved the expected standard.ⁱⁱ It should be noted that children with EAL have widely varying levels of English proficiency. Some children have no English and some are fluent multilingual English-speakers and may have lived in English-speaking countries or have been educated in English throughout their childhood.

Attainment is also affected by first language; for example, there are significant differences between Tamil and Chinese speakers, who, on average, perform better than Pashto and Turkish speakers. In addition, prior education and arrival time impacts on attainment.^{vi} The Wiltshire Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service advise on best practice for individual pupils to ensure those most vulnerable to poor attainment are to fulfil their academic potential.

Provision at Wootton Bassett Infants has been well targeted this year with 50% of EAL pupils making above average progress in Reading/Writing/Maths at the end of KS1 compared with 69 % of all pupils.

A designated teaching assistant has supported identified children in the school with their language and progress across.

Religion and Belief

Data is not collected for monitoring purposes on Religion and Belief, and so there is no information available to compare the attainment of pupils who have/or do not have a religion or a belief. Wootton Bassett Infants School recognises how important faith and belief can be as part of a young person's developing identity, whether this relates to a specific faith or belief, or whether this relates to wider belief systems, morals, and ethics.

Wootton Bassett Infants School is committed to supporting all our young people as they develop a personal relationship with their own values and beliefs, and to supporting, in the context of the Human Rights agenda, the role this plays in the moral and ethical choices they make in life.

This school takes incidents of prejudice-related bullying seriously and is committed to working closely with parents/carers to create a school environment which is nurturing, friendly and supportive for all our children. Our school has established a procedure for recording all incidents of prejudice-based bullying, and this includes bullying related to religion and belief. This school is vigilant in maintaining an awareness of, and appropriate responses to, this possibility. Wootton Bassett Infants School is aware that negative faith-based media attention can have an impact on all children and recognises the importance of ensuring that pupils are provided with accurate and appropriate information.

Wootton Bassett Infants School ensures that all pupils gain knowledge of and respect for the different faiths in Britain as part of our role to prepare pupils for modern life in a diverse Britain. As part of a whole school activity, pupils celebrate different religious festivals and learn from religious representatives from various communities. This school will continue its work to inform and actively promote acceptance and respect.

Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation

This school is committed to ensuring that all our children feel safe while at school and that each child is given the chance to develop their unique identity with support from teaching and support staff, and their peers.

Pupils are taught that families come in many different forms and include single-parent; grandparent led; same-sex parents; stepfamilies; foster families; families who have adopted children; etc. Our pupils understand that although families can be very different, what matters is that everyone in a family loves and cares for each other.

Disability (Special Educational Needs and Disability)

SEN pupils are categorised as 'SEN with a statement or Education, health and care (EHC) plan' and 'SEN support'.

Of all reported characteristics, pupils with SEN have the largest attainment gap when compared to those without any identified SEN. ⁱⁱ

Wootton Bassett Infants School is required to publish information on the attainment of SEN pupils. The focus of this section of this Equality Information document is disability. The disability areas being highlighted in this report have been adapted to reflect our current pupil profile. *Please note that as schools must adhere to data protection protocols in order not to breach the confidentiality of individual or small groups of pupils, this may mean that our school is limited in the data it is able to publish in this section.*

SEND Pupils and the link with Poverty.

This school is aware that there is a strong link between poverty and disabilities that negatively impact on educational attainment.^{xvi} Children from low-income families are more likely than their peers to be born with inherited special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), are more likely to develop some forms of SEND in childhood and are less likely to move out of SEND while at school. Also, children with SEND are more likely than their peers to be born into poverty, and, in addition, more likely to experience poverty as they grow up.

Wootton Bassett Infants School has made the achievement of pupils with SEND a whole school priority and is supported with expert advice from our SEND education specialists. Wootton Bassett Infants School also knows that a strong partnership with parents/carers is important and will continue to work collaboratively to support parents/carers as they seek to provide their children with a stimulating home-learning environment. We are an affordable school and are committed to challenge poverty as a barrier for all our pupils therefore improving the life chances our most vulnerable learners.

Pupils with Mental Health Concerns

There is an increasing understanding of the negative impact of social, emotional, and mental health difficulties (SEMH) on the educational attainment of pupils. The incorporation of mental health into the Equality Act 2010 has helped to highlight this important issue.ⁱ

Wootton Bassett Infants School provides support for children who need it and staff have undertaken additional training in response to mental health concerns exacerbated or caused by the Covid Lockdowns during 2020-21. Our EYFS children in 2024-25 were born during the pandemic and it has been recognised that these children will be impacted by this. We have trained a number of staff in the Five to Thrive approach and it's development as a school priority is a focus for the SIP. We have a trained mental health lead and staff are aware of the signs to look out for and the processes to follow when concerned.

EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

Equality Objective: Gender

This school is committed to helping every child develop into self-confident young people able to access all opportunities available to them. This school recognises that a small minority of children do not feel they fit neatly into society's views of boy-gender and girl-gender. This school will:

- Work with children on an individual basis to provide relevant support and to make appropriate adaptations to meet their needs.
- Ensure all our children thrive and achieve to the best of their ability and that gender stereotypes are minimised e.g., in the case of activities, toys, musical instruments or subjects that may be considered more girl or boy appropriate (an example of this might be that girls might be considered better at literacy and boys at maths)
- Ensure that all our children can be who they are without the introduction of unnecessary gender constraints or limitations.

- Educate our children about negative language that may isolate and demean vulnerable pupils

ⁱ The Equality Act 2010 and Schools

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf ⁱⁱ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/key-stage-2-and-multi-academy-trust-performance-2019-revised>

ⁱⁱⁱ Understanding the Gender Gap in Literacy and Language Development: Professor Gemma Moss and Dr Liz

Washbrook, University of Bristol 2016

<https://www.bristol.ac.uk/medialibrary/sites/education/documents/bristol-working-papers-in-education/Understanding%20the%20Gender%20Gap%20working%20paper.pdf>

^{iv} Gypsies and Travellers, House of Commons Briefing Paper Number 08083, 28 September 2017
<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8083/CBP-8083.pdf>

^v The Fragility of Professional Competence, A Preliminary Account of Child Protection Practice with Romani and Traveller Children in England, January 2018, University of Salford, Manchester

<http://usir.salford.ac.uk/46146/1/the-fragility-of-professional-competence-january-2018.pdf>

^{vi} Educational Outcomes for Pupils who have English as an Additional Language: The Education Policy Institute, The Bell Foundation, Unbound Philanthropy by Jo Hutchinson, Director for Social Mobility and Vulnerable Learners (February 2018) <https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/research-report/educational-outcomes-of-children-with-english-as-an-additional-language/>

^{vii} https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/652136/hatecrime-1617-hosb1717.pdf

^{viii} Tell Mama, 2017

^{ix} NSPCC, 2018

^x British Youth Council, 2016

^{xi} NSPCC, 2018

- ^{xii} <https://www.equaliteach.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/FAITH-IN-US.pdf> Funded by the Home Office Hate Crime Communities Project Fund
- ^{xiii} LGBT History Month, <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/lgbt-history-month-education> celebrated in February each year.
- ^{xiv} Stonewall School Report, 2017, The Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Trans Pupils in Britain's Schools <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/school-report-2017>
- ^{xv} Valuing All God's Children, 2017, https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/201711/Valuing%20All%20God%27s%20Children%27s%20Report_0.pdf

Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Special Education Needs and their Links to Poverty, 26 February 2016 <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/special-educational-needs-a>