

Wellgate Primary School

George Street, Mapplewell, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S75 6HR

Inspection dates

6–7 July 2016

Overall effectiveness

Good

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher's determination, commitment and very skilful leadership have created a culture where staff are unrelenting in ensuring that pupils are well cared for, safe and achieve well.
- Other senior and phase leaders have developed their skills and now make a valuable contribution to school improvement.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has been successfully improved through effective training and opportunities to share best practice. As a result, standards have risen in all key stages and pupils are typically making good progress from their starting points.
- Gaps in performance between disadvantaged pupils and their peers are closing convincingly.
- Pupils feel safe in school and are confident that an adult will help them if they are upset or worried.
- Pupils enjoy their learning across a wide range of subjects and talk with enthusiasm about the exciting and interesting enrichment experiences they have. This provision contributes well to their progress and their personal development, behaviour and welfare.
- Provision in the early years has been transformed. Children settle in quickly, are happy and most are now well prepared for Year 1.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and its work.
- Governors know the school well. They challenge leaders effectively and share the staff's passion to do the best for every child.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics, teachers are less skilful in deepening pupils' understanding and extending their thinking. Progress in these other subjects is not as rapid as a result.
- Leaders of subjects beyond reading, writing and mathematics have had less impact on improving provision in their area of responsibility.
- At times, teaching does not challenge the most able or meet the needs of those who find learning more difficult.
- A small number of pupils do not have high levels of attendance, so they miss important learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all teaching matches the quality of the best practice in the school so that pupils make rapid progress in all subjects by:
 - developing teachers' skills in challenging the most able in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics
 - ensuring that all teachers use assessment information consistently well to challenge the most able pupils and provide appropriate support for those who need more help
 - ensuring that leaders of subjects beyond reading, writing and mathematics take greater responsibility for monitoring, evaluating and improving the quality of teaching in their subject
 - developing the effectiveness of the support for teaching and learning provided by some additional adults.
- Ensure that additional government funding is used to even greater effect so that gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils are eradicated.
- Continue to work with families to further improve the attendance of those pupils who have higher rates of absence.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher has been instrumental in the school's improvement. Staff, parents, pupils and governors all highlight her significant influence and impact since the last inspection. Staff morale is high and there is a strong team spirit within the school. All leadership decisions are centred on making a positive difference for children. Expectations for what pupils should achieve are high.
- Clear roles and responsibilities for other senior and phase leaders, combined with effective training and support, have helped to ensure that these leaders are successfully driving improvement. Capacity for further school development is much stronger because it is not as heavily reliant on the headteacher as in the past. However, the role of teachers with responsibilities for subjects beyond reading, writing and mathematics in supporting improvements in the curriculum and in the quality of teaching is less well developed.
- Rigorous monitoring of the quality of the school's work, honest evaluation and decisive action have ensured that areas for development at the last inspection have been effectively tackled. The school has made effective use of external challenge, including from the local authority school evaluation officer, to confirm the accuracy of its self-evaluation and the impact of its work.
- Pupils' progress is carefully tracked. Extensive work done both within school and with other schools has ensured that current performance information is accurate. This was not the case in the past. Teachers and leaders know each individual child well. Any necessary additional support is quickly put in place so that pupils become secure in their understanding and are ready to move on to work at greater depth.
- Staff are robustly held to account for pupils' progress and for their wider responsibilities. Support and regular training are carefully matched to whole-school priorities and individual development needs. As a result, staff have become more skilful, and provision and outcomes for pupils have improved. Staff value the professional development they have received.
- External support from other schools and opportunities for staff to see best practice in other settings have been effective in helping leaders and staff develop.
- The curriculum is well matched to the needs of pupils. Carefully planned opportunities to develop and practise writing and mathematical skills in other subjects have helped to improve pupils' progress in these subjects. Enrichment activities, including residential visits, provide pupils with new and exciting experiences. Older pupils talked with enthusiasm about outdoor pursuits and challenges that had enabled them to conquer their fears, share in the successes of their peers and become more confident young people. All pupils in Year 5 study a brass instrument, developing a new skill and a wider appreciation of music. Studies of different countries, cultures and religions and opportunities to explore topical issues, such as the EU referendum, successfully help pupils prepare to be responsible members of the community and wider society.
- The positive impact of the pupil premium funding can be seen in the more rapid progress for disadvantaged pupils and the successful narrowing of gaps in performance. The school rightly recognises that sustaining accelerated progress for this group of pupils remains a priority so that differences in performance are fully eradicated. Pupil premium funding has also enabled disadvantaged pupils to access the school's rich variety of extra-curricular experiences, helping to promote their social and emotional development.
- The primary sport funding has been effectively used to increase pupils' participation in competitive sport with other schools and has provided additional resources to encourage pupils to be healthy and active during playtimes. Training for staff has successfully developed their expertise in teaching aspects of physical education.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors have used training and external review to develop their effectiveness since the last inspection. They have the skills to challenge leaders appropriately and are very supportive of the school. For example, they have supported the headteacher in dealing with less effective staff performance and staff turbulence, enabling the school to improve.
 - Governors are fully aware of the school's strengths and areas for development because the information they receive about the school's work is detailed and informative. Meetings with phase leaders, in addition to the headteacher, allow them to probe the impact of action to improve the school more deeply. They have been insistent in seeking assurance about the accuracy of performance information and monitor fair application of the school's appraisal policy.

- The governing body checks carefully the impact of additional funding on pupil outcomes. They know that, although the performance of disadvantaged pupils is improving, this remains a priority for the school.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff are knowledgeable about their responsibility for keeping pupils safe and how to identify and raise concerns. Risks, such as radicalisation and extremism, are well understood. New staff are trained and inducted quickly, so that no potential safeguarding issues are missed. Record-keeping of concerns and referrals is detailed. There are strong relationships with parents and external agencies that ensure pupils get the support and help they need in a timely way.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **is good**

- Teaching is much more effective than at the time of the last inspection. Professional development for teachers, peer support and accurate guidance from leaders on how to develop their practice further have all contributed to this improvement. As a result, pupils are making much better progress.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils in each year should be achieving in the context of the new curriculum. Accurate assessments of what pupils already know and can do are used effectively to build on prior learning, so pupils of differing abilities are suitably challenged, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are respectful and very little learning time is lost during transitions between different activities in a lesson. Many pupils say that they find learning fun. For example, pupils who had just moved up into Year 6 were enjoying comparing and contrasting different versions of 'Romeo and Juliet' as they developed their understanding of Shakespeare's work.
- Teachers model subject-specific language frequently and expect pupils to understand and use this vocabulary themselves. Similarly, pupils develop an understanding of how to make their own writing more interesting for the reader by using exciting vocabulary and incorporating a wide range of literary devices well suited to the audience or genre.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to question pupils effectively to identify misconceptions or extend their thinking, which challenges the most able.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective in helping pupils to be confident mathematicians.
- Reading is promoted well across the school. Reading records confirm that pupils read regularly at home and at school. New library books are helping pupils to develop a wider enjoyment of reading.
- Almost all teachers are marking in line with the school's policy. Pupils act on teachers' helpful feedback and improve their work. For example, pupils know which aspects of their writing they need to develop.
- Some, but not all, additional adults make a strong contribution to supporting pupils' learning by explaining new concepts and encouraging pupils to have a go and work things out for themselves.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare **is good**

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils develop into confident, capable learners who are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils work and play well together in this happy, harmonious school community. They show an appreciation of differences and there is a real sense of teamwork during learning and at social times. Pupils who join the school at different times are welcomed and settle in quickly.
- In lessons, most pupils are keen and enthusiastic, sharing their ideas and working closely together to tackle more-challenging concepts or tasks. Occasionally, some pupils are a little slow to get started or do not work at a brisk pace, so they do not always make as much progress as they could.
- Pupils understand the importance of how to keep healthy and know the 'daily mile' helps them to keep fit.
- Pupils are aware of potential risks they may face out of school and know how to keep themselves safe, for example when using the internet or at particular times of year, such as Bonfire Night.
- Staff know individual pupils well and they effectively support each pupil to flourish and develop during their time in the school. Pupils who need additional help to develop their social and emotional skills benefit from bespoke support.

- Parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about the way the school cares for their children and keeps them safe. Many noted how staff always 'go the extra mile' to help their child be happy and succeed.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and incidents of bullying are infrequent. They understand about different types of bullying and are confident that staff will quickly sort out any concerns they may have.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have a very clear understanding of the school's 'traffic light' system for behaviour and are clear about the seriousness and consequences of different actions or behaviours.
- Routines are well established in classrooms and at playtimes. Pupils' response to the whistle at the end of playtime and their orderly return into school, year group by year group, was impressive.
- Pupils' conduct in and around school reflects the school's high standards and expectations. These are consistently reinforced and modelled by staff.
- Any inappropriate language or unacceptable behaviour is swiftly dealt with. Parents and staff are extremely positive about the effectiveness of the school's work to ensure that pupils behave well.
- Pupils who need extra help to manage their behaviour receive the support they need to improve.
- Following a decline in overall attendance since the last inspection, action by leaders is now having a positive impact on reducing absence rates and the number of pupils who are persistent absentees. Attendance for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is also improving. Nevertheless, over this academic year, attendance remains just below the national figure. However, in the weeks running up to and including the inspection, a chickenpox epidemic was affecting overall attendance figures.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- In 2015, school leaders and governors were disappointed by pupil outcomes at each key stage. Despite some signs of improvement, other performance measures did not present a convincing picture of rapid improvement. Inaccurate historical assessments and staffing instability further hampered the school's ability to securely demonstrate stronger outcomes. Current performance presents a much better picture based on accurate assessment information, unvalidated results of national tests and assessments in 2016 and evidence of pupils' work over time in their books.
- In the early years, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development has risen for the second year and is now in line with national figures for 2015. From their starting points, this data and evidence from children's learning journeys show children making good progress from their starting points.
- In the Year 1 phonics (letters and the sounds they make) check, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard rose sharply in 2016, matching the latest available national average. Boys have done much better in 2016 than in 2015. This reflects the improvements in the teaching of phonics across the school.
- At the end of key stage 1, the large majority of pupils reached the expected standard in the national assessments and a small proportion were working at a greater depth, particularly in reading and writing. Many of these pupils have made accelerated progress, given that less than half of this cohort achieved a good level of development at the end of their Reception Year.
- Headline performance information for the end of Year 6 does not accurately represent the impact of improved teaching over time in the last two years. This is because a small but significant number of pupils joined the school shortly before the 2016 tests and assessments. For those pupils who were in the school prior to spring 2016, the proportion who met the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics is in line with the unvalidated national average for 2016. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils have made at least expected, and often better than expected, progress this year.
- In other years, school data typically shows that the large majority of pupils are working at the expected standard or at greater depth. Pupils achieve most highly in reading in all years.
- The gap between the performance of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school and nationally is closing over time, although headline data does not always fully reflect this. Nevertheless, the school is acutely aware that, although these pupils are making similar and sometimes better progress than their peers, more needs to be done to fully eradicate gaps in attainment.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. Frequent and careful checks on their progress enable small gains in learning to be accurately identified, so that teaching is targeted to help them achieve their next steps. Additional support and specialist teaching help them to make at least the same progress as their peers. This is confirmed through scrutiny of work in pupils' books.
- In reading, writing and mathematics, the most able pupils are challenged to deepen their understanding and extend their thinking effectively. However, this is less evident in work in other subjects where, despite covering a wide range of topics, work does not always provide as much challenge. For example, in science, pupils are not often asked to use their ideas and understanding about science to think more deeply and explain what they have found out.

Early years provision

is good

- Just over half the children who enter the early years have skills below those expected for their age. Many need additional support to develop their speech, language and communication, fine motor or social and emotional skills. Carefully tailored provision ensures that children's individual needs are well met, so that all are making expected progress and many make accelerated progress during their time in the early years. The majority of children are well prepared for Year 1.
- In 2016, two thirds of pupils achieved a good level of development, with a few very late arrivals into the Reception Year affecting headline data. While the proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving a good level of development improved in 2016, it is still lower than that of other pupils. However, half of the disadvantaged pupils have other additional needs, and learning journeys for all pupils show clear progress over time.
- As in other key stages, parents of children in the early years are very positive about the care and support for their children. Parents contribute to initial assessments and to their child's learning journey, supporting good progress over time. Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress through regular meetings with early years staff and receive frequent guidance on how to support their child's learning at home.
- Adults typically have high expectations of children based on accurate assessments. Teaching and learning activities are carefully planned to support children in achieving their next steps. However, there is some variation between the different classes in the effectiveness with which assessment is used to support children in their development.
- Provision contributes well to children's personal development and welfare. Children behave well and are keen to learn and explore both indoors and outdoors. They quickly grow in confidence and in their understanding of how to manage risks and keep themselves safe.
- The early years leader has a very accurate picture of the strengths of the provision and areas for development. Action taken to improve provision since the last inspection has been very effective in rapidly improving the proportion of children who are 'Year 1 ready'. Closer working with Year 1 teachers has improved transition, so that provision in Year 1 is being more closely matched to children's starting points.

School details

Unique reference number	131661
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10012009

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	392
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Sandra James
Headteacher	Cathryn Egginton
Telephone number	01226 383789
Website	www.wellgateprimaryblog.co.uk
Email address	school@wellgateprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	1–2 April 2014

Information about this school

- Wellgate is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils in the school supported through the pupil premium funding is broadly average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The percentage of minority ethnic pupils in the school is low, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils receiving special educational needs support is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above average.
- The school meets the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements for the publication of specified information on its website.
- Children in the Nursery attend part time.
- The school has received support from the executive headteacher of the Every Child Matters Trust who is a national leader of education.
- At the time of the inspection, pupils in Years 1 to 6 had just moved into their classes for the next academic year. Most Year 6 pupils were attending their new secondary schools as part of a two-week transition period.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups. Four observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors visited an assembly, looked at work in pupils' books and listened to a group of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- A wide range of documents were scrutinised, including findings of the school's own monitoring and evaluation, performance information for pupils currently in the school, minutes of meetings of the governing body, data relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour and information relating to the school's work to safeguard pupils.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and phase leaders, three representatives of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a group of staff with different roles in the school.
- Inspectors met with two groups of pupils and talked to other pupils during playtime and lunchtime. Inspectors also spoke with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted questionnaires from 37 staff, 93 parents and 25 pupils.

Inspection team

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