

Warblington School

Southleigh Road, Havant, Hampshire PO9 2RR

Inspection dates

3–4 May 2018

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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has not wavered from her resolve to educate and support all pupils so that when they leave, they all move on to well-considered futures.
- Senior leaders and governors work hard to develop the school, to provide an interesting curriculum and to strengthen the quality of teaching and learning. They back the headteacher's effective leadership enthusiastically and loyally.
- Despite the dip in GCSE examination results in 2017, the overall trend in pupils' progress has continued to rise since the last inspection. The majority of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make at least good progress in most subjects, particularly in Years 10 and 11.
- A parent whose daughter started school in the middle of an academic year wrote that, 'She is the happiest I have ever known her to be.' Another referred to a 'very positive experience of the school' over a number of years.
- Although teaching and learning are good overall, a small amount of teaching does not focus enough on high expectations and challenge for all pupils or adhere to the school's feedback policy.
- A minority of pupils do not take suitable care or pride in how they present their work. Sometimes they ignore the comments teachers give them about how to improve their work.
- The school's highly effective and consistent focus on respect for people's 'rights' contributes most effectively to pupils' evident good behaviour, respectful relationships with staff and consideration of those less fortunate than themselves.
- Through the curriculum, especially tutor time, pupils' personal development is outstanding. They study a broad range of topics related to being thoughtful citizens. Their appreciation of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues is strong.
- Teachers and pastoral staff contribute much to the high quality of care and support for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, children looked after and those who are vulnerable. The needs of service children are considered well.
- Teachers assess the standards of pupils' work accurately. Leaders reflect carefully on how to allocate funding, including for disadvantaged and other groups of pupils.
- Occasionally, in leaders' tracking and analysis of pupils' progress, it is not easy to identify which expenditure or action generated the best outcomes.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the effectiveness of teaching staff by:
 - teachers making clear to all pupils the high expectations that they have for what pupils should achieve
 - following the school's feedback policy when scrutinising pupils' work
 - developing pupils' discipline and pride in the presentation of their work.
- Improve pupils' progress, by senior and middle leaders:
 - continuing to support sharing of the best teaching practice within and between subjects, to further improve consistency in the quality of teaching
 - checking that staff consistently challenge all pupils in lessons, particularly in the humanities and modern foreign languages
 - improving the tracking and analysis of pupils' progress so that the most successful practice is easy to identify and develop further.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The report written when the school received a recent award stated, 'Warblington is a highly inclusive school.' This true statement reflects the headteacher's determination to welcome and care for all pupils, wherever they are from, whatever their backgrounds and whenever they arrive at the school. The care and oversight for service children and children looked after, for example, is exemplary.
- The headteacher is resolute and succeeds in making sure that most pupils leave the school well prepared for the next stage of their life. This includes pupils who may need additional support on joining the school after Year 7. The atmosphere in the school is one of respect and warmth.
- The school's careers advice and guidance is thorough and well organised. In 2017, practically all Year 11 pupils moved on to education, employment or training, including some valuable apprenticeships.
- The headteacher is very well supported by a senior leadership team of four assistant headteachers and middle leaders and other staff who equally value and respect her leadership. Staff morale is high. Responses to the staff questionnaire revealed the headteacher's sensitivity and thoughtful consideration for their well-being. They noted that she 'manages our workload as well as possible whilst getting the job done'.
- Leadership and management are not yet outstanding because pupils' progress in a few subject areas, for example modern foreign languages, is not yet strong enough despite convincingly moving in the right direction. The experienced head of English is giving strong support to the humanities subjects which, partly because of staffing changes, have yet to establish consistency in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Senior leaders allocate additional funds for disadvantaged pupils thoughtfully. They are confident that 'pupils' physiological needs are key building blocks to securing stable and secure support'. They therefore use funds to support these pupils' personal as well as learning needs.
- The school's monitoring information about pupils' progress in all years is more precise than in the past. However, this analysis does not identify easily where additional funds have been most beneficially spent, to improve pupils' academic progress. This applies particularly to the spending of additional funds to support disadvantaged pupils.
- Staff appreciate the quality of professional support and training they receive. It ranges from sessions for all staff on developments in teaching to individual programmes of support for those identified as lacking skills needed for successful teaching and learning. It is organised and planned carefully but clear evidence of assessing how quickly it has led to improvement is not as sharp as it could be.
- Helpfully, senior leaders reflect annually on the school's curriculum structure. As a result, they keep it as flexible as possible to match pupils' needs and interests, including through several creative subjects which pupils much enjoy. The school gives pupils the opportunity to join in many extra-curricular activities, trips and visits which broaden their horizons.

- A small group of Year 7 pupils (including several who have SEN and/or disabilities) benefit well from study in the gateway room where they agree they 'get more help'. Here, in a nurturing environment, pupils' reading, writing and confidence are brought up to speed. Asked what is good about the school, pupils responded, 'how it all fits together' and that 'the gateway approach works well'. Pupils here consider challenging concepts such as 'Is there a heaven?' stimulating them to reflect and articulate their thoughts clearly.
- Twice a day, pupils gather with their form tutors for 25 minutes of 'Supporting Achievement and Guiding Excellence' (SAGE). These sessions are structured carefully and delivered thoughtfully by most teachers. They are a distinctive and valuable feature of the school's curriculum. Basic skills, particularly reading and writing, feature alongside a wealth of topics covering personal, social and health education, the development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, fundamental British values and citizenship.
- The school's effective approach to personal, social and health education is helpfully underpinned by the school's commitment to the respecting of people's rights. Few pupils have heard of the term 'British values' but they certainly appreciate, through discussions on democracy and tolerance for example, what they are about.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is rightly confident that it has gathered momentum in the last couple of years. Members of the board now bring a valuable mixture of governance experience, skills, interests, ages and backgrounds. They are confident and keen to probe the outcomes of initiatives and to ask searching questions. One described their role as 'joining up the dots to make the school even better'.
- Governors probed the 2017 GCSE results carefully, to check the precise reasons for the apparent dip in outcomes. Their accurate analysis that this linked to pupils' particular needs was not expressed as an excuse but as a driving force for closer examination, going forward, of how effectively additional funds, particularly those to support disadvantaged pupils, are deployed. This work is in hand.
- Governors fully support the respectful relationships at all levels that the headteacher demands and rightly see this as an underlying strength in the school's work. It is clear that governors, along with senior leaders, actively support high aspirations for both staff and pupils within the welcoming and supportive atmosphere the headteacher oversees.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All members of staff, from caterers to middle leaders or office staff to teachers know they are equally responsible for pupils' well-being and safety. Staff records are extremely clear and meticulous. Case-study files are detailed and stored safely.
- Training is kept fully up to date both for designated safeguarding leads (DSL) and staff. The former are alert to vulnerable pupils' individual issues, keeping an eye out for any hint of absence being linked to missing children. DSLs keep a particularly sharp eye out

for pupils with child protection plans.

- Despite the very small number of parent and pupil responses to their questionnaires, it was clear that pupils feel very safe at school and no staff disagreed with this statement in their questionnaire. 'SAGE' lessons, assemblies and enrichment days focus on the many elements of pupils' lives that could threaten their safety. As Year 7 pupils observed, 'They constantly nag about online safety but it's done in an interesting way!' Pupils said that there were many members of staff they could talk to if they had any concerns or worries.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils much appreciate the respectful and constructive relationships they have with teachers. They learn particularly well when teachers' expertise and enjoyment of their subjects infuse lessons. This was seen, for example, in pupils' determination to practise their performances in music, to participate energetically in physical education and dance, to work enthusiastically in food studies, and to tackle difficult mathematical concepts.
- There are many strengths in the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in Year 11 and in English in all years. This department has selected more boy-friendly texts in all years to interest them as they tend to achieve lower outcomes than girls. Year 11 pupils, rightly, feel confident that they are being very well prepared for their GCSE examinations and say how much they appreciate the extra sessions that teachers deliver. Very occasionally, in Years 7 and 8 and in a few lower-set teaching groups, teaching does not push pupils' learning on sufficiently, for example by insisting on concentration to the end of lessons.
- Senior leaders have agreed with the local authority's leadership and learning partner that handwriting and presentation are not consistently 'reflecting the learning clearly taking place'. Improving these skills is rightly identified as one way to raise aspirations and further improve progress, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Some pupils acknowledge that the level of pride they took in their work varies between subjects and teachers.
- It is clear that pupils are now taking more care over their presentation but pupils' books that inspectors considered revealed inconsistency in the standards that staff demand. This is also true in that a few teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. More generally, teachers are taking action in this area; for example the mathematics department has recently given pupils two notebooks, one for 'rough' work and the other for perfect examples of work they have mastered. Some pupils are certainly trying hard to present the latter well.
- Many teachers adhere closely to the school's feedback policy and give pupils very useful verbal and/or written comments about how they can improve. They pose questions to deepen and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding and many, but not all, pupils take note and respond.
- Teaching in the 'gateway', by an experienced primary specialist, is most effective and pupils lacking confidence soon feel happier about attending secondary school. An intensive focus on reading, writing and/or numeracy improves these essential skills

rapidly. Nurtured well, pupils transfer successfully into mainstream classes as soon as they are ready.

- Staff are fully aware of the pupils they teach who are children looked after, have SEN and/or disabilities or are disadvantaged; they keep a careful eye on their progress and confidence. Several of the teaching assistants, particularly in English and mathematics, have relevant degrees or subject experience. This means that they are most effective at helping small groups of pupils to tackle particular aspects of subjects that they find difficult.
- Most tutors inject much energy into their 'SAGE' sessions, stimulating pupils' thinking about local, national and world issues but also making sure that important elements within their personal development are explored and discussed in depth.
- Most pupils are very well prepared for their futures. They receive high-quality careers advice which starts early on and is discussed every year. Year 10 pupils have two weeks of experience which is often well matched to their interests and career thoughts. In November 2017, over 80% of Warblington's Year 11 leavers from that year were settled in further education colleges with practically all the other pupils in employment or training.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. For example, pupils become well versed in the articles in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, discussing these frequently to good effect.
- Well-considered assembly themes support pupils' personal development well, linked to suitably focused 'enrichment days', for example, and referred to in many 'SAGE' sessions. During this academic year, pupils have learned about and discussed topics ranging from Facebook to the flu crisis or Stephen Hawking to prisons. Pupils are respectful of different faiths, lifestyles and family groupings and alert to many of the global issues that will be part of their future lives.
- Fully aware of how they should lead healthy lives, pupils were keen to improve the school meals, and now a chef oversees the high-quality, healthy foods on offer. Form tutors make sure that pupils learn about the potential dangers they may face, such as drugs, gang cultures, road safety or unacceptable online behaviours.
- Pupils are fully involved in fundraising, for the local area and wider charities, supporting their empathy and understanding of the needs of others. Each year group works on a community project. Year 9, for example, raised funds for the charity Mission Christmas and one form distributed 600 Christmas cards in the local community.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school's ethos and values of personal excellence, respect and friendship, inspiration, determination and courage, and equality contribute to how well pupils get on together.
- Asked how the school had changed in recent years, a Year 10 pupil said that 'pupils are so much nicer to each other'. Bullying is rare but, when it emerges, staff step in immediately so it does not escalate.
- A few pupils do not find it easy to concentrate in lessons. If the teaching is not sharp enough they chatter or switch off. Fixed-term exclusions are well below the national average because leaders do everything possible to keep pupils in school when their behaviour generates the need for reflection.
- Attendance in 2016/17 was well below average, largely explained by the unusually large group of Year 11 pupils who were persistent absentees. Leaders and staff worked hard to get these pupils into school, including through the employment of a home-school liaison officer. Despite focusing in a determined way on supporting particular pupils with poor attendance, the school struggled to impress on them and their parents and carers the importance of education. Current attendance figures have bounced back, closer towards the national average.
- The very few pupils studying off-site make good progress in improving their personal development, behaviour, life skills and English and mathematics.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2016, the steady upward trend in pupils' progress since the previous inspection generated securely good GCSE results in most subjects and for most pupils. The rate of progress of the majority of the disadvantaged pupils was as good as others.
- In 2017, for many groups of pupils, this improving trend continued. Nevertheless, the underachievement of a significant minority of pupils meant that, overall, GCSE outcomes dipped. This cohort of pupils included a number who joined the school during Year 11, often with low previous attainment, and a significant number whose achievement was compromised by persistent absence, despite leaders' best efforts to overcome this.
- Recently, current Year 11 pupils sat externally prepared and moderated pre-GCSE examination papers taken by large numbers of pupils nationally. The outcomes indicate likely improvement in 2018. This matches the quality of work and learning seen in Year 11 lessons during the inspection. These pupils are keen to do their best and willingly attend revision sessions. The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are ambitious and determined to attain some of the higher grades.
- In a few lessons in Years 7 and 8, and in a few lower-set teaching groups, progress, especially for disadvantaged pupils, is not securing consistently strong understanding and knowledge.
- The difference between disadvantaged and other pupils' progress has diminished considerably in recent years, although previously middle-attaining disadvantaged pupils make slightly less progress than others. The differences in Year 10 are small. Those in Year 9 have been identified and are being tackled. Small differences in Years 7 and 8 are found in some subjects, where leaders are exploring the most effective ways to

further eradicate these differences.

School details

Unique reference number	116475
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10045959

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	668
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Crabtree
Headteacher	Julia Vincent
Telephone number	02392 475480
Website	www.warblington.hants.sch.uk
Email address	admin@warblington.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	September 2014

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. Leaders and staff work through an informal partnership with other local schools, to share expertise and collaborate about developments in education.
- An overall average proportion of pupils have SEN and/or disabilities with only a very small proportion of pupils who have education, health and care plans. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, approximately one-third of pupils, is above the national average.
- In recent years, between 15 and 20 Year 7 pupils have been eligible for catch-up funding, which is for pupils who did not attain the expected standards in English and/or mathematics at the end of primary school.
- The school has an increasing number of children looked after. A few of them are far from their home area and/or have been out of education for a while.
- A number of service children attend the school.

- The great majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A well-below-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who enter or leave the school during Years 7 to 11 is well above that seen nationally.
- A very small number of pupils attend pupil referral units at either Woodlands Education Centre or The Key in Portsmouth.
- The school met the 2017 government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in close to 50 lessons. Most of the visits took place jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books in lessons and, accompanied by assistant headteachers, separately considered and discussed samples of Year 8 and Year 10 pupils' work.
- Inspectors met pupils and students informally and held meetings with groups of pupils from several year groups. They also met with a few of the most able pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- The lead inspector met the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and two other members. She also met the local authority's leadership and learning partner and the designated headteacher, due to take up post in September 2018.
- Inspectors took into account 65 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and the written comments submitted by a small number of parents. The numbers of parents (22) and pupils (42) who completed their respective Ofsted online questionnaires were very small.

Inspection team

Clare Gillies, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Christopher Doherty	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Foster	Ofsted Inspector
Colin Lankester	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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