

Walbottle Village Primary School

The Green, Walbottle Village, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE15 8JL

Inspection dates

14–15 May 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and executive headteacher lead by example. They set exacting standards, offering suitable challenge and support to enable staff to rise to meet them. Their aspirations for pupils are high.
- Senior leaders are rightly proud of the school's strengths and have an honest knowledge and understanding of its weaknesses. Their focus on further development is suitably keen.
- Senior leaders ensure that pupils experience a full, inspiring curriculum. This widens pupils' horizons, enhances their daily experiences and prepares them well for the future. Leaders' systems of assessment for subjects beyond English and mathematics are developing well.
- Subject leaders are full of enthusiasm for their specialism. Their own subject knowledge and skills are secure. Subject leaders' plans for improvement, including those for English and science, however, are not sufficiently sharp.
- Teaching and learning in key stages 1 and 2 are good. Teachers use assessment information to plan tasks and learning across subjects that accurately meet the needs of most pupils. Over time, therefore, pupils make strong progress and are well prepared for the next year or key stage. Specific strengths are mathematics and phonics. Nevertheless, at times, the most able pupils are not challenged sufficiently well.
- Leaders and teachers promote reading and writing effectively. Knowledgeable staff extend pupils' vocabulary well. Classrooms are literacy and numeracy rich. Stories, high-quality texts and a wealth of reading material excite pupils' interests and help them develop a love of reading. However, particularly in Reception and across key stage 1, there is inconsistency in how regularly adults listen to pupils read. Also, the quality of pupils' spelling, handwriting and presentation sometimes varies across subjects.
- Pupils are full of life and delightfully cheerful. Their broad smiles and hearty welcomes brighten everyone's day. Respectful, sociable behaviour is the norm in this inclusive school.
- Pupils across key stages feel safe. They are very well looked after by kind, caring and attentive staff. Adults and pupils get along extremely well, creating together a distinctively happy buzz of learning and activity.
- In the early years, resources are enticing. Overall, teaching and learning are effective. Children get off to a particularly strong start in Nursery. They make good progress and are very well prepared for Reception.
- Reception children make speediest progress when they work directly with staff. Some areas of provision lack challenge and purpose. This is especially evident during child-initiated activity.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enhance the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring subject improvement plans, especially those for science and English, are suitably detailed and measurable
 - challenging and supporting subject leaders to monitor their areas of responsibility with increased effectiveness
 - ensuring that pupils in Reception and key stage 1 have sufficient opportunities to read with an adult so that they make the best progress possible
 - increasing the proportion of pupils reaching a greater depth of learning in reading and English grammar, spelling and punctuation by the end of key stage 2.
- Further develop the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - providing the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, with more consistent challenge in their work across a range of subjects
 - improving the quality of pupils' spelling, handwriting and presentation across the curriculum
 - ensuring that provision for Reception children in the early years is purposeful and demanding, particularly during child-initiated learning and exploration.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- As part of the Valour Multi-Academy trust, senior leaders and trustees' efforts are making a positive difference for pupils. Since the school became an academy in June 2017, trustees and senior leaders have worked well in partnership to raise standards and to secure better outcomes for pupils. The proportion of pupils reaching expected standards by the end of key stage 2 across subjects including reading, writing and mathematics has risen, and the quality of teaching and learning is consistently strong.
- The chief executive officer (CEO), who is also the executive headteacher, ensures that both schools within the multi-academy trust have frequent opportunities to work collaboratively together. Relationships are positive and productive. This benefits staff as they learn from each other through sharing and debating best practice. Teachers value the professional development opportunities provided by leaders.
- Senior leaders are dogged in their determination to secure continuous improvement. The executive headteacher, headteacher and deputy headteacher provide effective leadership. They model high standards successfully, creating a warm, positive culture of respect and inclusivity. Aspirations for pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are fittingly ambitious.
- Leaders' attention to pupils' personal, social and emotional development and their welfare needs is exceptionally striking. The needs of vulnerable pupils and families are met with the utmost respect, care and diligence. In addition, pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development are central to leaders' aims and values. Consequently, pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Senior leaders ensure that the curriculum is suitably broad and varied. Extra-curricular opportunities are planned carefully to enhance pupils' experiences and to expand their horizons. Staff and pupils talk with enthusiasm and knowledge about subjects beyond English and mathematics. Leaders are currently working to embed their systems of assessment for foundation subjects to ensure that information about pupils' progress in each subject is suitably robust.
- Leaders have raised the profile of reading successfully. Their timely actions have addressed several of the issues that they correctly identified. As a result, pupils' outcomes by the end of key stage 2 in 2018 improved substantially and were above national averages at the expected standard. Leaders are currently working to ensure that all pupils across key stages make strong progress in reading by sharing and building upon the very best practices that exist.
- Subject leaders are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about their areas of curriculum responsibility. They promote their subjects well and are successful in ensuring that staff fully understand national curriculum requirements and expectations. Pupils therefore enjoy an appropriate diet of artistic, expressive and cultural experiences. Nonetheless, not all leaders monitor their subject regularly. Subject improvement plans, including those in English and science, lack the detail and measurability needed to have a positive, lasting impact on the quality of teaching and learning.
- Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs

and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. They engage effectively with parents and external partners to make sure that pupils' needs are identified and met promptly. Additional funding is thoughtfully directed to meet the needs of individuals. As with other pupils, small numbers of the most able disadvantaged pupils do not make the rapid progress across subjects that should be expected of them.

Governance of the school

- Members and trustees meet regularly to discuss the school's performance. Together with the local academy board of governors, they benchmark pupils' outcomes against other schools nationally and actively seek to ensure that Walbottle Village Primary School goes from strength to strength. Collectively, they have a good understanding of its successes and can speak knowledgeably about those areas requiring further attention.
- The local academy board meets at least termly. Governors discuss the effectiveness of pupil premium spending on disadvantaged pupils and check that additional funding for pupils with SEND is accelerating their progress.
- Governors get into school to talk with staff and pupils frequently. This means they experience the ethos first-hand and gain a direct impression of how it feels to be a pupil here. As a result, they are suitably well equipped to both challenge and support school leaders.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that safeguarding training is kept up to date. All staff, therefore, have a good knowledge of issues that may impinge on pupils' safety and well-being in today's society. Staff are alert to matters such as radicalisation, child criminal exploitation and county lines and how these might present. Consequently, risks for pupils are minimised.
- All adults have the highest regard for pupils' welfare and safety. They are confident in their ability to keep pupils safe and are vigilant. The school caretaker, for example, monitors the school grounds carefully each day, ensuring perimeters are secure and the site is free from litter and risks. Office staff make themselves available for any pupils or families arriving early. Records and logs are dated and suitably well detailed. Adults ensure that, where appropriate, information is shared promptly and effectively between trusted professionals to protect vulnerable pupils from potential harm.
- Staff work well with pupils and their families, making sure lines of communication are well and truly open. Parents who spoke with inspectors were full of praise for the approachability of staff. They were confident that their child's happiness and well-being were at the heart of all that the school does. Parents expressed confidence that there is always a trusted adult with whom they can share their worries, and any small matters of concern are dealt with promptly.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching across key stages and the curriculum is strong. Staff and pupils get along very well together. A happy buzz is ever-present as they enjoy their work, engage in tasks with zest and good humour and value each other's company. These positive attitudes are conducive to learning and ensure that most pupils make good progress from their various starting points. By the end of key stage 2, therefore, most pupils are well prepared for the demands of secondary education.
- Teachers in key stages 1 and 2 use their skills of questioning well to engage pupils in discussion and to check their understanding of new or tricky concepts. They listen carefully to pupils making sure that they have time to think and respond. In this way, and by ensuring that additional adults are deployed effectively to support pupils in their learning, teachers put the needs of their pupils first.
- The teaching and learning of phonics in Year 1 are effective. Adults take care to articulate sounds correctly and encourage pupils to do likewise. They offer pupils regular opportunities to practise and apply their skills and knowledge of phonics. Additional support is offered swiftly if any pupils struggle in their acquisition of this early reading skill. This means most pupils get off to a good start on their journey as readers and writers.
- Teaching and learning in mathematics are strong and improving. Staff work diligently to ensure that pupils know and can use their number skills, fluently, from the moment they start the school year. They offer regular opportunities for pupils to engage in mathematical discussions, reasoning and problem-solving tasks, insisting that pupils use mathematical terminology correctly. Teachers' own subject knowledge is secure and they plan tasks effectively that suit pupils' needs. As a result, most pupils make fitting progress.
- Teachers understand the importance of reading and its place in subjects across the curriculum. They have combined their efforts with leaders to raise the profile of reading. New reading materials better suit the needs of pupils. High-quality shared texts excite pupils' interests in authors and adults and pupils thoroughly enjoy the daily story-sharing sessions that have been embedded in practice. Pupils' vocabulary is expanded and enriched effectively. However, particularly in Reception and key stage 1, reading records reflect that the frequency with which adults listen to pupils' reading is variable. Additionally, too few of those pupils who are capable reach a greater depth of learning in reading by the end of key stage 2.
- Pupils use high-quality texts to collect authors' ideas and to apply these in their own writing. Pupils say they enjoy writing and teachers provide them with plentiful opportunities to write in a wide variety of forms. This means pupils learn the conventions of different types of writing, such as letters, poetry, plays and stories as they move through school. Pupils' presentation, however, is not of a consistently high quality. The quality of their spelling and handwriting varies across pieces of work in different subjects.
- Teachers in key stages 1 and 2 use assessment information well to plan learning and tasks that accurately meet the needs of most pupils. In subjects across the curriculum, the large majority of pupils make strong progress. Displays of pupils' work, including

their artwork, and pupils' books demonstrate this good progress well. Staff quickly identify any pupils at risk of falling behind, including those with SEND, and offer extra help and guidance. At times, however, challenge for the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, is less evident and not so prompt. Some tackle work they already know and can do or wait while others catch up. Consequently, the progress of some of the most able pupils slows.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Leaders foster pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. There is an air of awe, wonder and curiosity about learning. Staff get equally as excited as their pupils, as together they explore and investigate the world around them with fascination and enthusiasm. One parent's comment captured the benefits of such experiences for pupils: 'They are always happy and keen to come to school; I couldn't wish for anything more for my child'.
- Staff place a firm emphasis on respect, equality and inclusivity, making sure everyone feels welcome and appreciated. Close links with Newburn church and visits to other places of worship support pupils' understanding of different beliefs, values and faiths. Pupils, therefore, are open-minded, accepting and well-informed.
- Visitors and exciting trips colour pupils' daily experiences. Pupils regularly visit a range of museums, local crafts centres and places of interest nearby and further afield. They undertake personal challenges during residential trips where physically demanding activities such as kayaking, climbing and orienteering test their resilience and develop their physical and mental skills. Such experiences build pupils' confidence to manage risks safely, to negotiate unfamiliar settings and to recognise opportunities.
- Teachers provide pupils with a wide range of after-school clubs and extra-curricular activities. Pupils take part in choirs, fencing, curling and dance clubs, learning new skills and discovering new talents. The 'daily mile', regular physical education and competitive sporting events are extremely effective in contributing to pupils' life-long understanding of the importance of physical fitness, good health and well-being.
- The highly positive ethos that permeates throughout school contributes very effectively to making pupils feel special and valued by the adults around them. Pupils who spoke with inspectors said their teachers are 'very kind', 'really good fun' and 'look after them very well'. The mutually respectful rapport between adults and pupils is striking and uplifting.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe and all parents who spoke with inspectors wholly agreed with pupils' views in this regard. Pupils can talk about bullying and its different forms extremely well. There are, however, no reported incidents of bullying. Pupils have complete confidence in the adults around them to manage any worries that they might have.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils conduct themselves very sensibly inside and outdoors. They are immensely proud to wear the Walbottle Village uniform and pupils behave exceptionally well. The tiny proportion of pupils who require some additional help to manage their behaviour, benefit enormously from the clear, consistent classroom rules that are very well embedded. Good manners and positive vibes abound.
- While pupils are lively and full of fun, they are also considerate and tremendously kind towards one another. Without prompting, older pupils tend to their younger peers in a most caring manner, helping with tricky coat buttons or supporting them to manage a new game. Friendship groups, thoughtful peers and the shared use of some sign language allow everyone to feel part and parcel of the cheerful school family.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is evident in their excellent rates of attendance. Since becoming an academy, pupils' overall attendance has been above national averages and pupils rarely miss a day.
- In lessons, there is a purposeful and productive air. Pupils demonstrate exceedingly positive, 'can-do' attitudes to their work and learning. They are highly respectful of adults, listening and responding immediately to adults' instructions and directions. For a few pupils, pride in the presentation of their work and a deeper understanding of how to be a wholly successful learner, are still developing.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Leaders' work is having a positive effect on pupils' outcomes. Due to effective teaching, current pupils are making strong progress across year groups and subjects, including English and mathematics. Since becoming an academy, pupils' overall attainment by the end of key stage 2 has compared well to national averages.
- Pupils' work on display and in books show that they are making good progress from their different starting points across the wider curriculum. In subjects such as geography, history and science, pupils enjoy regular opportunities to engage in practical tasks and first-hand experiences. The proportion of key stage 2 pupils reaching the expected standard in science has been above national averages for the last two years.
- Pupils' phonics outcomes in Year 1 are a particular strength of the school's work. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check has been consistently above the national average. In 2017 and again in 2018, all girls reached the expected standard. Due to strengths in the quality of teaching within phonics, current pupils in Year 1 are also making good progress.
- In 2018, the proportion of key stage 2 pupils who reached the expected standard in the reading, writing and mathematics combined element was higher than the national average. This demonstrates that the large majority of pupils left school well prepared for key stage 3. Currently, most pupils in Year 6 are also well equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to manage the demands of the secondary curriculum.
- Pupils' attainment by the end of key stage 2 across most subjects is rising over time. In

2018, the proportion of key stage 2 pupils reaching the expected standard in all subjects, was above national averages. Nonetheless, by the end of key stage 2, few pupils over time reach the greater depths of learning in reading or in English grammar, spelling and punctuation, though some pupils are capable. The lack of challenge for a small proportion of the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, across year groups, is a contributory factor.

- In key stage 1, pupils' attainment has been inconsistent over time. Pupils' attainment in science, for example, was above the national average in 2017 but below in 2018. In addition to this, in 2018, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading fell to just below the national average. Progress is weaker for those pupils who read infrequently with adults. Leaders have identified this issue and plans are afoot to enable all pupils in key stage 1 to read more regularly with staff.
- Currently, most pupils with SEND are making good progress in their learning across a range of subjects. This is due to the effective support they receive and the good quality of teaching.

Early years provision

Good

- Overall, the quality of teaching and learning in the early years is good. Most children make good progress from their different starting points and leave the Reception class well prepared for Year 1. Current children's progress is good overall and is particularly strong in the Nursery.
- Children are exceptionally well looked after by very thoughtful, kind adults. Any little scrapes or knocks are managed with the utmost care, sensitively. Children's feelings and emotions are carefully considered and managed. Their dignity is well preserved and basic hygiene and personal needs met successfully. Statutory welfare requirements are met. Consequently, happy children grow in confidence and self-esteem.
- Staff build positive partnerships with parents and outside agencies. They make sure that communication is timely and are quick to celebrate children's successes as well as any identified needs, with parents. Staff ensure that additional expertise, such as speech therapy, is drawn upon promptly where needs arise.
- Children benefit from vigilant staff who are attentive to their health and safety needs. Children are encouraged to take safe, calculated risks to negotiate the environment with age-appropriate control and confidence. They behave well, climbing, managing obstacles and handling equipment with increasing flexibility and skill as they move from Nursery to Reception.
- Most children in Nursery make good or better progress across areas of learning. The environment is rich in literacy and numeracy, showing that staff understand the importance of developing children's basic reading, writing and number skills, from the moment they enter the school. During inspection, for example, Nursery children were engrossed in counting and discussing numbers to 20 with a skilful adult, finding one more and one less from a given number. Their excitement about early mathematics was infectious and plain to see.
- The proportion of children who reached a good level of development by the end of the Reception year fell in 2018 to slightly below the national average. Leaders have revised

some practices and approaches to successfully address some of the issues identified. Nonetheless, some areas of provision and tasks lack purpose and challenge for Reception children, particularly where learning is child-initiated. Consequently, a relatively small proportion of children do not make the rapid progress that should be expected of them.

School details

Unique reference number	144559
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10048416

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	206
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Sharon Little/Rob Scott
CEO	Dame Nicola Nelson
Headteacher	Alison Oliver
Telephone number	01912675320
Website	www.walbottlevillage.newcastle.sch.uk
Email address	admin@walbottlevillage.newcastle.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This is a slightly smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The school is part of the Valour multi-academy trust. The board of trustees delegates some governance responsibilities to a local advisory board. Further information is available by visiting the school's website.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much smaller than typically found in other schools nationally.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is lower than the national average. The proportion

of SEND pupils who have an education, health and care plan is also below the national average.

- The school offers a free breakfast club and a broad range of after-school clubs and activities.

Information about this inspection

- Teaching and learning were observed across classes and key stages. The headteacher conducted observations jointly with the lead inspector.
- Meetings were held with trustees, the CEO, the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders and those responsible for managing safeguarding and safety systems. Telephone conversations were held with the chair of the local academy board and a former school improvement partner.
- Inspectors listened to several pupils read, scrutinised pupils' work and talked informally and formally with pupils in each key stage.
- A wide range of the school's own information and documentation was studied, including its self-evaluation, assessment information, improvement plans and records of the checks made on teaching and learning. Information about governance and safeguarding practices was also examined, alongside policy documentation.
- The opinions of staff were taken into account through formal and informal face-to-face discussions.
- Inspectors talked with several parents face-to-face during the inspection.

Inspection team

Fiona Manuel, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Gillian Nimer

Ofsted Inspector

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