

# Inspection of a good school: George Washington Primary School

Well Bank Road, Washington, Tyne and Wear NE37 1NL

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Inspection dates:

26–27 February 2020

## Outcome

George Washington Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy school. Pupils say that they love school because adults try to make every lesson fun and cheer them up when they feel sad. Pupils told me that a good education is important. They know teachers set challenging work to help them make good progress. Pupils like running the daily mile because it helps their mental health and keeps them fit.

Pupils state that any fallouts between friends get sorted quickly. They know when to apologise if a problem is their fault. Pupils like the 'worry bench' because someone will come and talk to them and help with a problem. They are clear that bullying never happens. They told me how they get the chance to talk about bullying in school. Pupils cherish good friendships at the school because 'friends stick up for each other'.

The school is a positive and bright place. Pupils enjoy the well-ordered and attractive school environment. Displays in classrooms, shared areas and corridors are of high quality. The learning environment celebrates pupils' good work and highlights important information for learning. Pupils are proud of their work and proud of their school. Parents are supportive of the school. One correctly stated that the school is 'providing a high standard of teaching and care'.

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

The school benefits from having a skilled senior leadership team. All staff share the ambition to provide the best education for pupils. There is a strong sense of teamwork. Pupils are at the very heart of all the school does. Pupils have every opportunity to succeed.

Leaders have improved many parts of the curriculum. There has been an ongoing focus on English and mathematics. Pupils understand the important concepts in these subjects. Teachers are clear about what pupils need to learn. Lessons build on what pupils know. By the end of key stage 2, pupils achieve very well, as seen in published data. Leaders have now made sure that learning is well planned and sequenced in all creative and

foundation subjects. Pupils learn the important ideas in each subject in the right order. This makes sure that pupils gain the knowledge and skills that they need.

There is no doubt that reading is a high priority for the school. Reading corners in classrooms are attractive and inviting. Pupils love choosing a book and can name their favourite authors. All pupils enjoy a story read aloud before they go home. Pupils told me several times that they loved reading.

Phonics teaching is effective. Teachers ensure that pupils learn, remember and blend sounds together. Pupils who fall behind get extra support. Most pupils read books which match their early reading skills. However, others have books which contain sounds they do not know. They get stuck on words they cannot read. This hinders their fluency.

Pupils take on roles in school with enthusiasm and play a key role in the life of the school. Many aspire to be a 'young leader', a 'forest ranger' or to be part of the school council. They have the chance to visit many places of interest linked to their learning. Lessons and visits help pupils learn about things they may not otherwise come across. They are aware of mental health issues, and respect people of different faiths and cultures. Visits to the local care home help pupils understand some challenges faced by elderly people. They discuss and debate issues in class maturely. Pupils get the chance to explore moral and ethical dilemmas in an age-appropriate way.

Behaviour in every area of the school is good. Children in the early years are independent and creative. Pupils' behaviour in all classes, in the hall and at breaktimes is calm and sensible. They are friendly, polite and well mannered. In lessons, pupils are bright, alert and enthusiastic. From writing number sentences in Reception to naming parts of the human circulatory system in Year 6, pupils' determination to succeed is obvious.

The school supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. All pupils with SEND have access to the good quality curriculum. No one misses out. Work is adapted so that it meets pupils' individual needs. Staff make sure that activities and resources match pupils' abilities. This helps pupils with SEND to achieve more over time.

Leaders' commitment to improve pupils' attendance is seen in the work that has already been done to encourage regular attendance. This includes a range of rewards and incentives for good attendance. Yet there is some way to go before pupils' rates of attendance match those found nationally. A large proportion of absence is because pupils go on holiday in term time.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained and know how to keep children safe. The regular updates for staff give them information about risks to watch out for. All staff know pupils and their families well. Staff are vigilant in their oversight of pupils' welfare and safety. Staff discuss any concerns, no matter how small, with senior staff. Leaders record these concerns on the school's system if necessary. Pupils have detailed knowledge about how to stay safe

online. There is a strong culture of safeguarding in school. This extends to strengthening and supporting pupils' all-round physical and emotional wellbeing.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The school is focused on ensuring that pupils quickly learn to read. Some pupils practise early reading with books which are too difficult. This hampers their confidence in learning to read. Leaders must make sure that all pupils who are learning to read are given books that contain only the sounds they know.
- Leaders have introduced new strategies and personnel because pupils' rates of attendance are too low and are below average. Leaders must make sure that attendance strategies have a positive effect so that pupils' rates of attendance improve quickly and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent declines.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, George Washington Primary School, to be good on 3–4 March 2015.

## **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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	144220
<b>Local authority</b>	Sunderland
<b>Inspection number</b>	10121764
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	393
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trustees</b>	Thomas Lillie
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dr Ailsa Taylor (Executive Headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.gwps.org.uk">www.gwps.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- This school is larger than an average-sized primary school. It joined Oak Learning Trust in 2017.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club for pupils.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average. Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average.

## Information about this inspection

- I met with the executive headteacher, the head of school, senior leaders, subject leaders and other members of staff, including the attendance and family support worker.
- I met with a group of governors, including the chair of the local governing body. I also met with the chair of trustees of Oak Learning Trust.

- I took account of the 22 responses to Ofsted’s parent questionnaire, Parent View, and the 16 free-text comments. I also considered the 30 responses to Ofsted’s staff questionnaire.
- I observed pupils’ behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at playtimes. I gathered pupils’ views about the school through formal and informal discussions.
- I considered a wide range of documentation, including subject plans and safeguarding documents. I also looked at information relating to pupils’ behaviour and attendance.
- I undertook deep dives into reading, mathematics and science. This involved a meeting with subject leaders, visits to a sample of lessons in these subjects and listening to pupils read. The deep dives also included scrutiny of pupils’ books and other kinds of work produced by pupils who were part of the classes I visited. In addition, I had discussions with teachers and a group of pupils from the lessons visited.

### **Inspection team**

Phil Scott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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