

Inspection of a good school: North Waltham Primary School

Church Road, North Waltham, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG25 2BL

Inspection date: 15 September 2021

Outcome

North Waltham Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy village school that is well-loved by its community. Pupils delight in the different subjects they learn. They play together cooperatively and speak kindly of others. New pupils soon find friends. Pupils listen to their teachers and work hard in lessons. Their positive attitudes towards learning help them to live up to their teachers' high expectations. Parents praise the school's efforts to help their children and to prepare them for their futures.

Pupils behave very well at all times. They follow the school's clear rules and routines. They are thoughtful and want to do what is right. Pupils confirm that bullying is very rare in their school. They know what bullying is and the different forms it can take. They know how to deal with it. Pupils explained that talking to an adult in school means that any unkind behaviour stops quickly. They say that they 'totally trust' the teachers to help them feel safe.

Pupils like talking about what they are learning. They are also keen readers. Pupils' strong language skills help them to learn in a range of subjects. Teachers' enthusiasm is infectious and helps pupils to enjoy everything about school.

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

During recent years, leaders have ensured that pupils have a depth of knowledge and understanding in English and mathematics. The school's plans for these subjects are ambitious and consistently implemented. Planning makes clear what is most important to learn and in what order. The curriculum builds pupils' knowledge by adding to what they already know and can do. The school's well-trained teachers all have expert knowledge. They make lessons interesting. Teachers know what to do to help every pupil achieve success.

Pupils grow into fluent readers and discover a deep enjoyment of books. Children in Reception begin to learn letter sounds and shapes from the moment they start school. Adults support children to learn new vocabulary through play. Children enjoy games and

other fun ways to develop communication skills. During key stage 1, pupils learn traditional tales by heart. This helps them to create their own stories. Older pupils talk about their favourite books and authors. Pupils' impressive reading skills also help them to become successful writers.

Pupils achieve highly in mathematics too. In the Reception class, play areas provide opportunities for children to talk about numbers and shapes. Children learn the many ways they can work with numbers up to 10. Teaching builds upon this knowledge as pupils move through the school, so that they develop fluency, can solve mathematical problems and explain how they have worked these out.

Teaching provides timely support for pupils who need it. Teachers know their pupils very well and quickly identify if they slip behind in their learning. They devise appropriate plans to help pupils to catch up. For example, pupils who are struggling with reading practise phonics and read to a trained adult every day. Teachers' detailed understanding of pupils extends to those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They receive skilled support, including carefully matched learning activities and extra help, so they make strong progress.

Leaders have carefully planned the other curriculum subjects, such as history and art, so that pupils' knowledge builds over time. Teachers are passionate about the subjects they lead. Pupils enjoy their lessons. In a few subjects, planning is not as coherent as it could be. It does not make clear how pupils will develop their skills alongside their knowledge. The large amount of content in these subjects means pupils sometimes do not have enough time for practice. Leaders know this and are making changes.

Staff say that leaders are always available to support teachers' work. They often check on everyone's well-being. Teachers appreciate the professional support and training that enable them to grow in their roles. They told inspectors that changes to the curriculum and its assessment happen only if they are agreed to be in pupils' interests.

The school provides well for pupils' personal development. Pupils say that teachers are 'unbelievably kind'. Pupils learn how to treat others with kindness. They respect people with different backgrounds and abilities. No one is left out at playtimes.

Innovative strategies helped pupils to stay in touch with the local community during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) restrictions. The school set up a book trail around the village and started a virtual book club. Now that the restrictions have ended, pupils are looking forward to the imminent return of the many after-school clubs that they used to enjoy.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff are very well trained to know how to identify concerns. They waste no time in finding help for pupils and their families who need it, working closely with partner agencies. Leaders are adamant that, where safeguarding is concerned, no stone must be left unturned.

Leaders keep staff up to date. They understand the risks that could affect pupils, such as the dangers of social media. Older pupils are taught how these platforms can threaten their safety. Pupils understand why some of these have age restrictions and how they can keep themselves safe when they are online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not prioritised the most important knowledge in a few of the foundation subjects. These subjects are not sufficiently well sequenced to emphasise the most important knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn. It is clear that leaders are already taking action to revise next year's curriculum and to ensure that all staff are fully equipped to deliver it. For this reason, the transitional statements have been applied.

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 outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 2012.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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

Unique reference number	115932
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10199975
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	140
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Trish Wyatt
Headteacher	Jeff Maidment
Website	http://www.northwaltham.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 September 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been no relevant changes since the previous inspection.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken their views into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers. The lead inspector also met with governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders and pupils about some other subjects.

- Inspectors spoke to pupils in class and around school during their free time to listen to their views.
- To look closely at safeguarding in the school, inspectors spoke to pupils, staff and governors. They looked at safeguarding records and documentation, including the school's single central record that contains details of recruitment checks.
- Inspectors considered 69 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including free-text responses. They also considered the views of 54 pupils and 19 staff who completed the Ofsted questionnaires.

Inspection team

Linda Jacobs, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sam French

Ofsted Inspector

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