

Inspection of a good school: Warren Dell Primary School

Gosforth Lane, South Oxhey, Watford, Hertfordshire WD19 7UZ

Inspection dates:

25 and 26 January 2022

Outcome

Warren Dell Primary continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if the inspector was to carry out a section 5 inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a section 5 inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive here. Pupils and staff feel happy and proud to be part of the Warren Dell family. Aspirations and expectations for all are consistently high.

Pupils enjoy the rich, well put together curriculum. They achieve well. Pupils get deeply involved in their learning and talk enthusiastically about it. Pupils are encouraged to be curious, resilient and to persevere.

Pupils delight in selecting a book from the vending machine when they have been awarded a raffle ticket. This, alongside their reading passports, promotes a love of reading.

Pupils behave well. They work and play harmoniously with their friends. Pupils say that bullying does not happen but, on occasions, pupils can be a bit mean. They say that if this happens, their teachers always sort it out. Pupils feel safe.

Pupils are eager to take on leadership roles and enjoy attending the rich variety of clubs on offer. Pupils talk fondly of school trips, going to swimming and performing arts visits. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Many commented what a difference the school was making to their children.

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

Leaders have put together a curriculum that is ambitious and is based on raising aspirations from the moment pupils start school. Leaders make sure pupils are thoroughly prepared with the knowledge and skills they need by the end of Year 6.

Teachers have a secure understanding of the curriculum. They use their subject knowledge well. Staff attend high-quality training and are given support to ensure the teaching of all subjects is consistently effective. Teachers value this training and the support provided by the trust. As a result of this detailed and well-taught curriculum, pupils are able to know more and have a strong understanding of new learning. For example, Year 2 pupils could make accurate predictions about how long it would take to get to Portugal without flying by drawing upon and applying skills and knowledge they had learned previously.

Attentive adults model the words and language they want pupils to learn. They make sure that learning builds on what pupils already know and can do. Pupils, including the most disadvantaged, are taught the skills and knowledge needed to be curious learners. Pupils are confident to link their learning with other subject areas and with previous blocks of learning. Staff regularly check and provide feedback in lessons to make sure pupils are remembering what they have been taught. However, leaders are still refining assessments at the end of units in some foundation subjects. This is not fully in place for teachers to use so they can check the achievement of pupils throughout the curriculum.

In the early years, children are taught early reading skills well. Right from the start, adults make sure the youngest children hear lots of new sounds and words, for example from listening to stories. This is so that children learn and understand new vocabulary and phrases. Children are immersed in mathematical opportunities. Expectations are high, and the correct use of apparatus starts from pre-school. There are also plenty of opportunities to reflect and enjoy a quiet moment with an adult.

Leaders make sure that pupils succeed at reading and become fluent readers. Staff clearly model and know how to help pupils become fluent readers. The books that pupils read are well matched to their stage of reading. Some pupils have extra help to be confident readers. These pupils catch up quickly due to the high-quality, individual support given by staff.

Pupils with special educational needs and /or disabilities (SEND) access the same ambitious curriculum as their classmates and achieve well. Leaders identify pupils' needs accurately. They make sure staff have the knowledge and skills to provide pupils with SEND with the high-quality support they need. Personalised targets are set and are appropriate to ensure pupils make the steps of progress needed. The quality of education in the transitional classes is expertly delivered so that all pupils learn and remember more.

Pupils are well prepared socially and emotionally during their time in school. The school's culture builds pupils' character and feeds into pupils' aspirations. This includes pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils. The personal, social and health education curriculum develops pupils' understanding of different relationships and healthy choices. Leaders have strong links with health services. Leaders have made sure pupils have access to a range of enrichment activities. This inspires pupils to be creative and try new things, such as going on to perform in West End shows. The wealth of extra clubs nurtures pupils' interests and talents well.

Trustees and members of the academy governing board play their full part in sustaining and building on the high quality of education and care pupils receive. Their attention to detail when monitoring the curriculum has resulted in strong improvements being made.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding pupils is at the top of everyone's agenda. Staff are well trained to spot the signs and symptoms of abuse. Detailed records of concerns are well kept. Leaders share information quickly and appropriately. Leaders work tirelessly to get pupils and families the correct support. Staff make sure pupils are kept within a safe environment and can talk about their concerns. Pupils say they feel listened to, and staff care about them.

Leaders ensure the curriculum prepares pupils to be safe in the wider world. Teaching responds to issues such as understanding the risks of social media. Parents are informed at necessary points to reinforce the learning at home.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have started to refine assessment from early years to Year 6 in some subjects. This is enabling subject leads to have a detailed picture of the impact of their subject across the school. This work needs completing to ensure teachers are able to check pupils' achievement in all areas of the curriculum.

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 first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Warren Dell Primary School, to be good in December 2013.

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	144905
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10212030
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	254
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Patrick McAteer
Headteacher	Jenny Morley (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.warrendellprimary.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the school has started to admit two-year-old children in the pre-school class.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has a behaviour support provision on site that is commissioned by the local authority. This includes an off-site farm as part of the provision.
- The school operates a breakfast and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and the chief executive officer for the trust. The inspector also met with the vice-chair and chair of the trust and two governors, including the chair of the academy governing board.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- The inspector spoke with the early years leader, visited the pre-school and nursery classes and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- The inspector spoke to parents when pupils were being dropped off at school. The inspector spoke to pupils in the breakfast club, after-school club and on the playground.
- The inspector scrutinised the school's single central record, considered the safeguarding policy and spoke to staff and pupils. The inspector looked at case files and discussed a range of safeguarding records with the designated safeguarding leads.
- The inspector considered 29 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and 18 free-text responses submitted during the inspection. The inspector reviewed 31 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey and 14 responses to the online pupil survey.

Inspection team

Isabel Davis, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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