

Inspection of a good school: Wardley Primary School

Keir Hardie Avenue, Wardley, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear NE10 8TX

Inspection dates:

1 and 2 February 2022

Outcome

Wardley Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Wardley is an inclusive, caring and supportive school where pupils get the help they need to achieve well. Leaders have created a safe and happy place for pupils to learn. Pupils say that they appreciate the care and guidance they receive from their teachers. Pupils were keen to tell the inspector that one of the best features of the school is their teachers. This view is supported by most parents who value the range of support provided for their children. One parent, echoing the views of many, wrote, 'The staff are helpful, compassionate and really encouraging for my child to do their best.'

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND learn well. This is because of the targeted support teachers provide, both in the classroom and through small group interventions. Leaders have designed a curriculum that supports the development of pupils' personal skills and their academic knowledge very well.

Pupils are polite and very well behaved. Pupils told the inspector that behaviour is good in school, and the inspector agrees. They say bullying rarely, if ever, happens. Pupils are confident adults will help and deal with any instances if they occur. Staff make sure there is always time to listen to pupils. They help pupils to understand how to deal with bullying if it occurs through work in personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. Pupils say they feel safe in school.

Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they hold. Democratically elected roles, such as school councillors, enable them to contribute purposefully to school life and in their local community. They speak with great pride about 'being the best they can be'.

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

Leaders want all pupils to have the best experiences and opportunities possible. Pupils benefit from a broad and ambitious curriculum. Leaders have set out clearly what pupils should learn and when.

Staff waste no time in teaching children in the early years how to read. Children enjoy learning well-known rhymes and songs. They are quickly taught how to recognise sounds and then use them to read and write words. In key stage 1, reading and phonics lessons take place daily. Teachers provide lots of opportunities for pupils to rehearse and say the sounds they are learning aloud, which helps them to remember them. Pupils at risk of falling behind are quickly given support. They receive extra sessions from well-trained staff to help them to catch up. The books pupils read are well matched to the sounds they know. Leaders' subject monitoring has led to a consistent and successful approach to the teaching of phonics across the early years and key stage 1.

Leaders have created a mathematics curriculum that is ambitious and challenging. However, this is not implemented with enough consistency in all classrooms. This results in work being given to pupils that is not always sufficiently demanding. However, pupils say they enjoy mathematics. They are confident in applying their previous learning to help them understand new topics. Pupils enjoy sharing methods and techniques they have learned. Leaders ensure there is a focus on developing mathematical vocabulary from the early years. For example, children in Nursery are confident in naming shapes using accurate language such as triangle, rectangle, square and circle.

In other subjects, such as geography, teachers break down pupils' learning into small, carefully sequenced steps. This helps pupils to remember important information. The inspector saw pupils in Year 1 using simple mapping skills, while in Year 6 pupils built on this knowledge to help them read detailed ordinance survey maps.

The help that leaders provide for pupils with SEND is a strength of the school. Knowledgeable staff ensure that pupils get the support that they need to achieve. Leaders have established the 'Star Suite' for pupils. It provides a place for a small group of pupils with SEND who need very targeted support. The provision is well resourced and provides a curriculum that mirrors that of their peers.

Leaders have made pupils' personal development a high priority. Leaders support pupils' emotional well-being by providing access to counselling and yoga sessions. Pupils can access a wealth of after-school clubs, including Brazilian football and Lego club, with pupils recently entering a national Lego competition. As a result of this rich and varied PSHE curriculum, pupils have a strong understanding of how they can contribute positively to the local community. For example, pupils have made donations to support a local food bank.

Staff are very appreciative of the support that they receive from leaders and governors. Staff feel valued. As a member of staff said, 'Leaders are the role models that we aspire to be.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a culture of care in the school. Staff know the pupils and their families very well. Pupils are placed at the centre of every decision regarding their safety and well-being. Leaders are tenacious in their pursuit of appropriate support for pupils and families in need. Staff teach their pupils how to keep themselves safe, including when going online. Pupils know they can speak to any member of staff if they have any worries.

Safeguarding training is reviewed regularly. Staff have the skills and knowledge they need to identify pupils who may be at risk. Leaders have ensured that the necessary checks are made on adults who work with children in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, such as mathematics, leaders' ambitious curriculum is not being implemented with enough consistency. This means that the work pupils receive sometimes lacks challenge. Leaders need to ensure that the high expectations they have in their curriculum are implemented by teachers when lessons are delivered to pupils

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 May 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	108371
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	10211252
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	244
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Timothy Hudson
Headteacher	Nicola Wallace
Website	www.wardleyprimary.org/
Date of previous inspection	24 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of additional funding through the pupil premium grant is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND at the school is also above the national average.

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 carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and geography. The inspector met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work and talked to pupils and teachers.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, subject leaders and members of staff. They met with the school improvement partner and five governors, including the chair of governors.

- The inspector monitored pupils' behaviour around school, at breaktimes and during lessons. They also met with groups of pupils to hear their views about their work and school life.
- The inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult and visited reading and phonics lessons in Reception and Year 2.
- The inspector reviewed the school's self-evaluation and leader's plans for improvement.
- The inspector considered 37 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 37 free-text responses. The inspector considered 18 responses to the staff survey and 37 responses to the pupil survey.
- The inspector examined information about safeguarding and met with the lead for safeguarding.

Inspection team

Anne Vernon, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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