

Inspection of a good school: Warley Primary School

Chindits Lane, Warley, Brentwood, Essex CM14 5LF

Inspection dates:

2 and 3 February 2023

Outcome

Warley Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a welcoming school where pupils are encouraged to aim high. There is a positive buzz in the classrooms, dining hall, corridors and playground. Pupils say learning is fun. They love their school and are proud of it.

Kindness champions promote positive attitudes to friendship and play. They say when someone is praised 'the kindness gets passed on'. As a result, instances of bullying are rare, and pupils feel safe at school. Staff respond quickly to help pupils resolve any issues that arise.

Staff have high expectations, to which pupils rise. Pupils are friendly and respectful, both to each other and to the adults. They behave well and are enthusiastic about their learning. They enjoy a challenge. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported.

The school's programme of wider opportunities is extensive. Pupils can have their say by being part of the student council or 3Es committee (environment, economics, ethics). Older pupils can become house captains. There are many and varied extracurricular clubs. Trips to places like the Tower of London or a local wildlife park give pupils rich experiences and enhance their learning. Regular 'welly walks' teach them a love of nature.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious and broad curriculum, which details the essential information pupils need to learn in each year group. It starts in early years, where children acquire the skills and knowledge they will need later. In mathematics, for example, children in the Reception class learn to count, order, estimate and compare. This prepares them well for learning about number in key stage 1.

The curriculum is planned sequentially so that pupils build on their prior knowledge and frequently revisit it. This helps them to remember what they have learned. Vocabulary is

prioritised and builds gradually. In music, for example, pupils learn the language they need to talk about dynamics. In Reception and key stage 1, they describe pieces of music as being loud, quiet or soft. Pupils in key stage 2 use terms such as forte, mezzo forte, piano and mezzo piano comfortably.

Leaders ensure that teachers are confident about the subjects they teach through relevant training. This is especially helpful to those who are new to the school, or at the start of their career.

Teachers explain new concepts clearly. They check pupils' understanding frequently. The information from these checks helps them plan future lessons and put extra help in place for those pupils who need it.

Pupils enjoy learning. They like the activities teachers set for them and say they get immediate feedback in lessons. This helps them to achieve well. In writing, pupils do not achieve as well as in other areas of their learning. Leaders have identified writing as an area for improvement. They ensure that teachers give pupils opportunities to write in all subjects. However, in some subjects, teachers do not always address pupils' misconceptions and errors in writing.

Pupils with SEND are identified quickly. Targeted support is set up to meet their needs. Whether they are in the school's specialist Rainbow Class or a mainstream classroom, these pupils get individualised provision from skilled and nurturing adults. This enables them to flourish and access the full curriculum.

The school prioritises reading. Pupils enjoy daily story time and appreciate their well-stocked class libraries. They are enthusiastic about books and know that reading skills are important for their future success. Children start to learn phonics soon after joining Reception. Staff are well trained in teaching the school's phonics programme. Pupils build their knowledge of the sounds they need to become fluent readers systematically. Those pupils with gaps in their learning get the help they need to catch up. This includes older pupils in key stage 2.

Leaders have thought carefully about ways to bolster pupils' well-being. Pupils love looking after the school's two rabbits and many canaries. Some pupils enjoy weekly visits from a therapy dog. Everyone takes part in 'Mindful Mondays' when yoga or meditation sessions set them up for the week ahead. Leaders are also keen to develop pupils' character. Special responsibilities give older pupils leadership skills. All pupils are encouraged to become global citizens through a programme of lessons and assemblies about social responsibility.

Members of the governing body visit the school regularly. They support leaders' vision for the quality of education and have confidence in their ability to drive further improvements. Staff describe the school as a family where they feel valued and listened to by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are sharply focused on keeping pupils safe at school. They ensure staff know how to recognise the signs of potential harm. They keep staff up to date through meetings, emails, conversations and quizzes. The clear system for reporting concerns is understood by everyone. When concerns are raised, leaders act swiftly to support pupils and their families. They do not hesitate to involve external agencies if needed.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online. They know to talk to an adult in school if they have any worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Expectations of pupils' writing are not consistently high across all subjects. Sometimes errors and misconceptions are not addressed, so some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that teachers' expectations of pupils' writing are consistently high and errors are corrected, regardless of the context or subject. This is so that standards continue to rise and pupils achieve well in all aspects of their work.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2017.

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.

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	115042
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10255221
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	342
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gillian Bryant
Headteacher	Jennifer Evans
Website	www.warleyprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the school has expanded. In 2019, it changed from being a one-form entry to a two-form entry primary school. A new classroom block was built, and pupil numbers have been gradually increasing since then.
- The school runs its own wraparound care, before and after school.
- At the time of the inspection, the school was not making use of any alternative provision.

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 held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, two assistant headteachers and four members of the governing body. She spoke on the telephone to a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, she discussed the curriculum with subject leaders,

visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. The inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.

- The inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator to discuss provision for pupils with SEND.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector met the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy DSL. She scrutinised the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks. The inspector also spoke to governors, staff and pupils to evaluate safeguarding.
- The inspector reviewed a range of other school documentation and policies, including the school's key priorities plan and minutes of governors' meetings.
- The inspector observed the school's breakfast club and spent time talking to staff and pupils at the after-school club.
- To gather pupils' views, the inspector spent time observing and speaking to pupils. There were 86 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.
- To gather parents' views, the inspector reviewed the 96 responses and 78 free-text responses submitted to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. She also spoke to parents at the school gate.
- The inspector gathered staff members' views by speaking to several of them and reviewing the 33 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Caroline Crozier, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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