

Inspection of Walesby CofE Primary School

New Hill, Walesby, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG22 9PB

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 April 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy their time at school. They know the school's 'RICH' values. They understand why respect, integrity, courage and honesty are important and help to prepare them for life beyond school. As one pupil said: 'They help to make you a better person. They are our moral beliefs.'

Pupils behave well. They are well-mannered. They know how the 'Walesby Way' rules help them to get on with each other. They are motivated by the rewards on offer, including verbal praise, team points, receiving 'thoughtful bear' and being selected for Friday's 'magic mentions' assembly. They understand how 'reflection' helps them to think about poor behaviour.

Bullying is very rare. Pupils know that bullying is 'several times on purpose'. They know the different forms that it can take. They know whom to go to for help if needed. They are confident that leaders will deal with any instances of bullying that might occur.

Pupils make good use of the extra-curricular activities on offer, including French, music tuition, cooking and a variety of sporting activities.

Pupils work hard in lessons. However, weaknesses in the curriculum, along with some instances of poor attendance, mean that the school's overall effectiveness is not yet good.

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

The school has faced significant staffing challenges over recent years. Despite these challenges, interim leaders have continued to drive the school forward. They have brought about many and much-needed changes in a relatively short period of time. However, as leaders recognise, there is more to do.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is planned and sequenced appropriately across the majority of subjects. They have begun to put in place strategies to help pupils remember what they have learned. However, in some subjects, the curriculum does not make clear the precise things that pupils are expected to know and remember. As a result, pupils' recall of what they have learned is inconsistent across different subjects.

Phonics is taught well. The phonics programme makes clear which sounds pupils should know at each stage of their education. Pupils remember the sounds that they have learned. They use phonics to decode unfamiliar words. Reading books are closely matched to the sounds that pupils know.

Children in the early years are happy, confident and well looked after. The activities on offer help them to explore and consolidate what they have learned, both in the classroom and when learning outside. The curriculum is well planned and sequenced

across each of the areas of learning. However, it is at the earliest stage of being implemented. As such, children have not yet fully benefited from well-sequenced learning. Until very recently, the curriculum has not made clear what children are expected to achieve, across the curriculum, term by term.

There are inconsistencies in the help and support that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive. These pupils have plans that set out what they are expected to achieve each term. They are reviewed regularly. In the best cases, the plans contain targets that are achievable and measurable. They show the support that will be put in place to help pupils to achieve them. However, in other cases, targets are too broad. The plans do not make clear enough what type of support pupils should receive.

Pupils learn about a wide range of cultures, religions and beliefs. They understand the concept of equality. They know the full range of protected characteristics. They know what fundamental British values are and why these are important. Pupils do not tolerate any form of discrimination. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Leaders recognise that some pupils miss too much school. They have recently strengthened the procedures for tackling poor attendance. This is a step in the right direction, and is showing early signs of success. However, the measures do not make clear how leaders will tackle cases of more serious, persistent absenteeism.

Parental views of the school are mixed. Some parents speak positively about the school. They praise the 'small school' ethos and the care given to pupils. However, a significant proportion of parents would not recommend the school. They raise concerns about communication and the provision for pupils with SEND. As a result, the school community is not as cohesive as it could be.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders take the necessary actions to keep pupils safe. Staff receive regular training and reminders about safeguarding. They understand their roles and responsibilities. Any concerns are logged. Leaders swiftly act upon these. Safeguarding records are detailed and fit for purpose.

Governors carry out their safeguarding duties effectively. They carry out regular checks to ensure that leaders are doing the things they should to keep pupils safe. The statutory record of checks on people working with pupils is thorough and well maintained.

Pupils know how to stay safe in the community, when learning online and while on roads and near water.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The majority of the school's curriculum is planned and sequenced. However, in some subjects, it does not set out precisely enough the most important content that pupils are expected to know and remember. As a result, pupils' recall of the curriculum is inconsistent. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum makes clear the most important content that pupils are expected to know and that pupils consistently remember this.
- The early years curriculum is at a very early stage of implementation. Children have not yet begun to learn the curriculum and work towards the milestones that it sets out. Leaders should ensure that the early years curriculum is fully implemented.
- The quality of plans for pupils with SEND are too variable in quality. In some cases, targets are too broad and do not make clear enough the support that pupils should receive. As a result, the help that these pupils receive is inconsistent. Leaders should ensure that the plans for pupils with SEND are specific, measurable and make clear the support that will be put in place.
- Despite recent green shoots of improvement, absence remains high. Too many pupils miss too much of their education. Leaders should ensure that the school's procedures for tackling poor attendance are fully implemented and provide systematic support and challenge where improvements are needed.
- A significant proportion of parents do not view the school positively. They raise concerns around communication and provision for pupils with SEND. Leaders should ensure that parental views are sought, explored and, where appropriate, acted upon.

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	122771
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10267940
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	111
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rachael Skelton
Headteacher	Joanne Marshall (Acting Headteacher)
Website	www.walesbyschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was absent at the time of the inspection.
- The school's deputy headteacher is the acting headteacher.
- The acting headteacher was also the acting leader for the early years at the time of the inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative education providers.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school, which is an inspection of the school's religious character, took place in February 2018.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held meetings with the acting headteacher, curriculum leaders, the acting early years leader and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in four subjects: reading, mathematics, religious education and modern foreign languages. To do this, they met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and met with teachers and pupils. Inspectors also spoke to leaders, looked at curriculum documentation and spoke with pupils about history, geography, computing, art and design and science.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair and the vice-chair. He also held a telephone discussion with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and written comments from parents. Inspectors spoke informally to parents outside the school. The lead inspector spoke to two parents on the telephone. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- Inspectors met with safeguarding leads. They reviewed school documents, including those relating to safeguarding, governance, behaviour, the work of the local authority and attendance.
- Inspectors spoke informally to pupils at breaktimes, in the dining hall and on the playground. An inspector visited the school's breakfast club and observed pupils in assembly.

Inspection team

Vic Wilkinson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

George Huthart

Ofsted Inspector

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