

Inspection of Warblington School

Southleigh Road, Havant, Hampshire PO9 2RR

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 July 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils like attending this kind and caring school. Many pupils attend school regularly. However, too many disadvantaged pupils are persistently absent. Pupils build strong friendships with their peers. Bullying incidents are dealt with well by adults, although some pupils do not see it this way.

Staff know pupils very well. Importantly, they have pupils' best interests at heart. Leaders and staff are committed to unlocking pupils' potential. They liken the skills they want to give pupils to a bunch of keys, each of them a tool that will help pupils to succeed in the future. The way the school helps pupils to develop personally is well thought through.

Pupils generally have positive attitudes to school and learning, although this is not the case for all. Pupils have mixed experiences as they move from class to class. Pupils told inspectors that their learning is better in some subjects than it is in others. Inspectors concluded the same. While there are clear rules and routines that leaders have introduced, low-level disruption is not managed consistently well by all staff. Not all staff have high enough expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. This means that some pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

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

Leaders' ambition to provide excellence is not currently being realised. They have worked hard over the last few years to identify what they want pupils to learn in each subject, so they are prepared for the future and leave with appropriate qualifications. As a result, content is clearly identified and logically sequenced in leaders' curriculum plans, with suitable adaptations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, the way the curriculum is delivered is inconsistent. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

In the stronger subjects, pupils benefit from regularly revisiting previous learning. They enthusiastically discuss their learning. Staff check pupils' understanding through skilful questioning. They adapt teaching to ensure pupils have fully grasped the content. Pupils talk confidently about what they have learned and demonstrate a good understanding of the subject. As a result, they achieve well in these subjects.

In contrast, the approaches teachers use in other subjects are not as successful. Teachers do not always explain tasks clearly and do not routinely pick up on pupils' misconceptions. Consequently, pupils are unsure about what it is they are supposed to be doing and move on without a firm understanding. The way pupils' learning is checked is inconsistent. The feedback pupils receive is not focused sharply enough on what it is that pupils need to do to improve. Too many pupils have gaps in their knowledge and skills in these subjects. This is also reflected in pupils' work.

Reading is high priority. Pupils read for pleasure through daily 'sit together and read' sessions. However, some pupils do not read texts that are most appropriate for them. Staff check pupils' reading carefully at regular intervals and support pupils who are struggling. For example, pupils with gaps in their phonics receive targeted help. While staff are suitably trained, they do not routinely address the errors pupils make. Books pupils are reading are not aligned well enough to support the weakest readers to improve.

The personal development of pupils is good. A well-planned personal, social and health education programme sets pupils up well for the future, preparing them successfully for adulthood. Pupils learn about equalities, diversity and other faiths and cultures. They also receive structured and valuable careers education and have an opportunity to complete work experience. Various clubs, such as debating and sport, support pupils' development well.

Leaders and governors are committed to improving the school. They know the school well and recognise the areas that require further improvement. However, leaders do not consistently check how well their actions to improve specific aspects of the school are working. As a result, many of the strategies they are working on are not having a rapid enough impact, particularly on pupils' achievement and the attendance of disadvantaged pupils. Governors are providing a careful balance of challenge and support to leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Keeping pupils safe is at the forefront of everyone's minds. Staff build strong working relationships with pupils and families. They get to know them well. They are alert to the potential risks in the local area. Strong partnership working means that leaders coordinate useful support for pupils who need it. The safeguarding aspects of the curriculum are well thought through and successfully teach pupils how to stay safe, including online. This is supported by tutor time sessions and assemblies. Clear systems and processes allow staff to report concerns swiftly. These concerns are routinely followed up by knowledgeable safeguarding leaders.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The way the curriculum, including the teaching of reading, is implemented is inconsistent. The teaching approaches used in some subjects are more effective than they are in others. As a result, pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding in some subjects. Leaders should continue to develop teachers'

pedagogy to ensure that pupils receive a consistent experience across the curriculum.

- Some teachers do not consistently check pupils' understanding of what they have learned across the curriculum. This means that learning sometimes moves on before pupils fully grasp the required knowledge. Consequently, learning does not fully meet all pupils' needs. Leaders should ensure that all teachers routinely check pupils' understanding and adapt plans for future learning accordingly.
- Some staff do not have high enough expectations of pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around school. This leads to low-level disruption which slows pupils' learning and means that pupils have mixed experiences as they move from one classroom to another. Leaders should ensure that all staff understand and uphold the school's expectations for pupils' behaviour, responding more consistently when pupils do not conduct themselves well enough in lessons and at social times.
- Leaders do not consistently check how well their actions to improve specific aspects of the school are working. As a result, many strategies they are working on are not having a rapid enough impact, specifically on pupils' achievement and the attendance of disadvantaged pupils. Leaders need to ensure that leaders at all levels monitor the impact of their work more rigorously, so that they can maximise the impact of their efforts.

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	116475
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10287905
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	638
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Colin Swettenham
Headteacher	Mike Hartnell
Website	www.warblingtonschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	3 and 4 May 2018

Information about this school

- The headteacher and chair of the governing body have both taken up their posts since the last inspection.
- There have been some changes to middle and senior leadership positions since the last inspection.
- The school uses one registered alternative education provider.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held a wide range of meetings with the headteacher, other leaders, and teaching and support staff at the school. The lead inspector met with the chair and vice chair of the governing body and three other governors. He also held a discussion with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, geography and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors 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 pupils' work. Inspectors also visited 'sit together and read' sessions and reading interventions.
- Inspectors gathered additional evidence about the curriculum in other subjects, including through speaking to pupils and looking at curriculum planning.
- Inspectors held discussions with a wide range of pupils to gather their views about the school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View and the free-text comments received during the inspection. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors held meetings with safeguarding leaders, governors, staff and pupils. They scrutinised the single central record and sampled pupil safeguarding records. They also reviewed a selection of pupil case studies.
- Inspectors held discussions with a leader at one registered alternative education provider.
- Inspectors also took account of a range of other information, including the school's self-evaluation, development plans, school policies and governing body minutes.

Inspection team

Shaun Jarvis, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Adrian Percival	Ofsted Inspector
Julia Mortimore	Ofsted Inspector

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