

Inspection of Waltham Leas Primary Academy

Manor Drive, Waltham, Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire DN37 0NU

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 November 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

The headteacher of this school is Claire Rigg. The school is part of Waltham Leas Primary Academy Limited, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Helen Jayne Spauls.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and enjoy attending school. They feel included in all aspects of school life and know that their opinions matter. Pupils speak highly of their teachers. They enjoy learning across all subjects with their friends.

The school has high expectations of pupils' learning and achievement. Overall, pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning and engage well during lessons. This is also the case for children in the early years. Pupils know that mistakes and errors are important parts of learning. They told inspectors that they try their best and that they appreciate recognition for their efforts. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well.

Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion. They are positive about the many differences between themselves and others, such as disability and sexual orientation. Pupils say that everybody is welcome in their school. They are respectful and polite towards other people.

The school offers a wide variety of enrichment experiences. Pupils relish competitions with other schools and opportunities to learn outdoors. For example, they go camping and visit places in the locality and beyond. Pupils benefit from sports, art, cookery and coding clubs. Dance sessions help to provide pupils with strategies to relieve stress.

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

The school has worked tenaciously to design a balanced and ambitious curriculum. Links with other providers, including a university, help to broaden pupils' learning experiences. The school has identified precisely the knowledge that pupils should learn and when this should happen. This enables pupils to build on their prior learning from the early years upwards. As a result, most pupils learn well.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They choose suitable activities to deliver curriculum content. In most subjects, teachers check what pupils know and remember. This allows them to adjust lessons to address any gaps in knowledge that pupils might develop. However, in a few subjects, teachers do not use assessment strategies well enough to check the depth of pupils' understanding. Some pupils struggle to make connections in learning and apply their knowledge across a wide range of subjects.

Pupils with SEND follow the full curriculum. The school works closely with parents and carers, and with other professionals, to quickly identify any additional needs that pupils may have. This aids staff to provide timely and effective support, so that pupils with SEND typically learn well.

The school fosters pupils' love of reading well. Book areas in each classroom contain a selection of high-quality texts and genres. Pupils take these home to read and

write book reviews to recommend their favourite stories to their classmates. The school helps parents to support their children's reading at home by providing workshops. Parents are invited into school each week to read stories to classes.

Children begin to learn phonics as soon as they start in Reception. Pupils practise their reading using books that match their current phonic knowledge. Staff give pupils additional support if they fall behind. Overall, staff have the knowledge and skills required to help pupils to become confident readers in readiness for key stage 2. However, not all staff deliver the phonics programme consistently well. For some pupils, this hinders their progress in reading fluently and accurately.

Mostly, pupils demonstrate positive behaviour during lessons and around school. The school takes effective action on the rare occasions that pupils' usual high standards of behaviour lessen. Children in the early years play together remarkably well. They interact kindly with each other while they engage in activities. Well-thought-out transition arrangements help children to settle into school routines quickly.

The school provides a broad programme to support pupils' personal development. Pupils have plentiful opportunities to engage in meaningful debates and learn to make educated choices. They take on roles in school which develop their leadership skills, such as sports ambassadors, e-safety champions and members of school and eco-councils. Pupils learn to be responsible citizens through activities, including recycling and fundraising for charities.

Trustees and the school work closely together to improve the quality of education provided for all pupils. Most staff feel valued. They are dedicated to their roles and work hard in all that they do. Staff appreciate the support that they receive from the school. This includes the steps taken to reduce workload and to involve them in policy developments. Some staff expressed a few concerns about their morale in school. Inspectors found that the school is taking appropriate action, such as providing well-being forums and involving specialist outside agencies, to support staff's well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, assessment strategies do not enable teachers to check pupils' understanding well enough. This means that, over time, some pupils do not develop the depth of knowledge that they should. The school should refine assessment strategies in these subjects, so that pupils develop a deep body of knowledge across the curriculum.

- Some staff do not follow the agreed approaches when delivering the phonics programme. This slows some pupils' progress in becoming fluent and accurate readers. The school should make sure that all staff deliver the phonics programme consistently well.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	137760
Local authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10290190
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Helen Jayne Spauls
Headteacher	Claire Rigg
Website	www.walthamleas.net
Date of previous inspection	9 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Waltham Leas Primary Academy Limited, a single-academy trust.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher and a new chair of the trust have been appointed.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

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

- Inspectors carried out deep dives into the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, religious education and history. In each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders and visited a sample of lessons. They spoke with teachers and with some pupils about their learning. Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work. They also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subject areas.
- The lead inspector observed some pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult. He discussed reading with a group of older pupils.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders of the school. The lead inspector met with representatives of the academy trust. He also spoke with the chair of the trust and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed how pupils behaved around the school, including at playtime and during lunchtime. They spoke with several groups of pupils about their experiences at school and considered the responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and their well-being. They took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

David Lobodzinski, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gordon Watts	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen McMullan	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
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