

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Walter Halls Primary and Early Years School

Querneby Road, Mapperley, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG3 5HS

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 November 2024

Outcome

Walter Halls Primary and Early Years School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

At Walter Halls, everyone strives 'to be the best'. Pupils, including those who arrive part way through their primary education, rise to the school's high expectations for behaviour and conduct. Clear routines and systems ensure that pupils can learn in a happy, calm and positive environment. As a result, from their starting points, pupils' achievements continue to improve.

Purposeful and productive lunchtimes provide pupils with thoughtful opportunities to keep learning. They love exploring using resources that encourage them to create, problem solve, collaborate and risk take in a safe way. Even on days when the school grounds are frozen, pupils are still keen to use the play equipment outside during lunchtimes. Pupil ambassadors and monitors carry out their roles with pride. They check carefully on their peers, provide support and advice when needed and ensure that the school environment is well looked after.

The school celebrates the diverse community it serves. Staff build strong relationships with families from the very start. The pastoral team offers a range of support, including access to local services. This means that the needs of pupils are identified quickly so that when they are at school, they are ready to learn.

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

Since the previous inspection, the school has ensured that the curriculum is fully sequenced in each subject. Over this period, the school has faced several staffing

challenges. New subject leaders are developing their understanding of how to lead their areas of responsibility effectively.

The school's curriculum outlines the knowledge that pupils need to recall over time. This important information is revisited and builds in a logical manner. Each lesson helps pupils to retrieve what they know already and rehearse it often. Staff use questioning well to understand what pupils can recall. This helps them to identify and resolve pupils' misconceptions promptly. Many pupils arrive at the school with low levels of oracy and communication. To counteract this, the school carefully considers when pupils will encounter key vocabulary in each subject. Occasionally, pupils struggle to use suitable words and language to verbalise their understanding or knowledge of the school's curriculum.

Reading is prioritised from the very start. Staff provide skilful support so that the youngest children and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can use appropriate language and words to express their needs. For some pupils, this may be through pictures and symbols. A new early reading programme has been implemented. With expertise, staff often check and pinpoint the exact sounds that pupils need help to recall. When needed, pupils are given extra support so that they can catch up quickly. This new approach is having a positive impact on pupils' phonics outcomes, although this is not yet reflected in the school's published information.

'The Helm' and 'The Crow's Nest' are provisions at the school for pupils with SEND and those who have social, emotional and mental health needs. The support these provisions offer is precise and tailored to pupils' specific needs. This helps them return to their classrooms quickly, so that learning time is optimised. Lessons are carefully adapted so that pupils with SEND can overcome any barriers to learning. The school uses advice from specialists and other educational professionals to prepare these pupils for their next lesson, phase or stage in education.

The school's pastoral team makes effective use of information about safeguarding and behaviour to get to the root cause of any attendance concerns. The 'Team Around' approach provides families with timely support and challenge. In most cases, this results in demonstrable improvement in pupils' overall attendance.

Through the school's well-considered personal development provision, pupils learn about healthy relationships and about the different communities that make up modern Britain. They know how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. Pupils learn how to stay safe when online and how to report any concerns should they arise. However, some pupils do not have the language or vocabulary they need to explain their understanding of fundamental British values with confidence.

Staff benefit from training that gives them the expertise they need to deliver the school's curriculum effectively. It also helps them make decisions to promote the safety, behaviour and welfare of pupils. Staff appreciate how the school considers their workload and well-being before making any changes to systems and procedures.

Governors use the information from leaders to help them ask precise questions about the school and the progress it is making. They support and challenge the school to make decisions in the best interests of its pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, staff do not check carefully enough how well pupils have learned key vocabulary, including the language associated with British values. Pupils do not always develop the necessary communication and spoken language skills they need to express their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. The school should ensure that all staff focus closely on pupils' oracy and language development, so that pupils can communicate their learning in a meaningful way.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in February 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' 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	122456
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	10366392
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	445
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	James Sullivan
Headteacher	Emma Beardah
Website	www.walterhallsprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 July 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- There have been some changes to staff and leadership recently.
- 'The Helm' and 'The Crow's Nest' are both specialist provisions in the school that cater for pupils with SEND. Some of the pupils who attend these provisions have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Pupils who attend these provisions receive a curriculum that is tailored specifically to their needs and to the targets on their EHC plan.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision
- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with various leaders who have oversight of the school’s curriculum, behaviour, attendance and personal development.
- Discussions were held to consider the school’s curriculum for English, mathematics, and the schools’ knowledge of the world subjects, which include history, geography and personal, social and health education. A sample of lessons were visited. The inspector spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at examples of pupils’ work.
- The inspector held a meeting with representatives of the local governing body and Nottingham Schools Trust.
- The inspector observed pupils’ behaviour during the school day.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including plans that set out the school’s long-term vision, records of local governing body meetings and logs relating to pupils’ behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted’s online survey for staff. She also spoke with parents on site and considered the views expressed through Ofsted’s Parent View survey.

Inspection team

Shaheen Hussain, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

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