

Wardley Primary School

Address: Keir Hardie Avenue, NE10 8TX

Unique reference number (URN): 108371

Inspection report: 6 January 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	● ●
Expected standard	● ● ● ● ●
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

✔ **Safeguarding standards met**

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

There is a tangible and high-quality culture of inclusion. Pupils of all levels of need, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are welcomed warmly into the Wardley 'family'. This is especially important because, over time, a significant number of pupils join the school throughout the year. A well-planned programme of professional development ensures a confident and capable staff. These highly trained staff assess pupils' needs quickly and accurately. Appropriately sourced in house or external expertise ensures that barriers to learning are identified and reduced. This allows pupils to thrive and achieve.

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, ensure that the pupil premium grant is carefully allocated and closely monitored. This has notable impact for those who are eligible for the pupil premium funding. As a result, achievement and attendance for this group of pupils are typically high.

An ambitious vision for the most vulnerable pupils in school means that no stone is left unturned to ensure that pupils receive the support and care they need to succeed. Staff meticulously monitor the impact of this additional support, working closely and highly effectively with parents and other agencies.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders have a very well-developed understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement. They have taken effective action since the last inspection to address inconsistencies, for example in the mathematical challenge that pupils experience. This work has had demonstrable positive impact, as evidenced in pupils' books and also in published outcomes at the end of key stage 2. Leaders are proactive in recognising areas for further development. The actions they take are having rapid impact in terms of the quality of pupils' writing. This now needs to become more widely embedded in practice across the school.

Governors are well informed and highly skilled. They fulfil their statutory duties and other roles in school effectively and with admirable diligence. They exemplify expertise that extends beyond their own roles and responsibilities. There is a palpable sense of shared understanding across the governing body. Governors support and challenge leaders, ensuring that pupil premium funding is used to improve experiences and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders at all levels have all children's best interests at heart. Engagement with parents is also highly effective. The community that has developed around the school is exceedingly positive.

Staff benefit from a high-quality programme of professional development. Early career teachers are equally well supported to build their expertise. Staff appreciate the efforts that leaders go to in ensuring their workload and wellbeing are a high priority. Staff are not asked to do anything that will not benefit the pupils at the school.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

From what are often low starting points on entry to school, pupils typically achieve well by the time they leave Year 6. Over time, disadvantaged pupils achieve especially well in reading and mathematics. They now achieve more highly than non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. The work that leaders have implemented around achievement in mathematics has had notable impact. Outcomes in mathematics at the end of key stage 2 have increased significantly.

Leaders monitor pupils' progress with rigour. They seek to improve outcomes further where necessary. For example, leaders have prioritised writing across the school as outcomes at the end of key stage 2, and in other year groups, are more variable over time. Leaders are aware that a number of pupils across year groups have not secured sufficient basic skills in writing to achieve as highly as they could. Typically, the majority of pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

As a result of leaders' work to make the school a nurturing and welcoming place to be, pupils' attendance across the school is typically positive. As pupils progress through school, their attendance improves further. The attendance for disadvantaged pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), is significantly and consistently above the national averages. Where concerns around pupils' attendance are raised, leaders take effective action. Rates of persistent absence fluctuate over time but are typically close to the national averages. Leaders have also addressed punctuality. This work has significantly reduced the proportion of pupils who are late for school each day.

Behaviour across the school is typically positive. Expectations are clear. The youngest children in early years understand the rules and follow routines well. Many older pupils act as role models of behaviour for others. Bullying is exceptionally rare and is not tolerated. Pupils report very low levels of derogatory language. Any instances are investigated and dealt with effectively. However, there are occasions where some pupils' behaviour can disrupt learning for others. Staff are proactive in spotting instances where behaviours might escalate into more serious disruption. They address this sensitively and effectively. Where adaptations are necessary for pupils with SEND, these are highly effective.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Over time, the school has created high-quality curriculums across subjects, designed to spark interest and enthusiasm for learning. These curriculums develop the knowledge and skills that pupils need for their next steps. For example, careful thought has gone into how children in early years get the experiences they need to successfully move into key stage 1 at the end of their Reception Year.

Leaders make astute decisions about where improvements can be made in response to their own monitoring. A well-planned programme of professional development for teachers enhances their subject knowledge. Teaching is typically effective. As a result, the curriculums are taught with fidelity and accuracy. This includes in classes that comprise pupils from different year groups.

Pupils talk enthusiastically about their learning. For example, they explain how a lever works in a moving mechanism or discuss semi-aquatic organisms. Others accurately use coordinates in mathematics. Many pupils secure the foundational knowledge they need to be successful in reading, writing and mathematics. In some cases, however, pupils have gaps in their knowledge, particularly in writing, which hampers the quality of the work that they produce over time. Leaders are taking action to address this. This work is beginning to show signs of impact.

Early years

Expected standard 

From children's first days in early years, they enjoy an environment that fosters a love of songs, stories and rhymes. They then use these experiences to enhance their play. For example, young children build different 'houses' from plastic bricks, recounting the tale of 'The Three Little Pigs' as they do. Others role play as unicorns and enjoy eating 'carrots' and 'radishes'. Well-trained staff encourage children to develop their understanding of communication and language. Following a snowy period in the outside area, children investigate how the snow melts and use comparative language such as 'faster' or 'slower' to describe how different areas of meltwater flow downhill. Typically, adults engage in high-quality interactions with children, listening carefully and responding appropriately.

The curriculum in early years prepares children well for phonics teaching in the Reception Year. They develop their ability to hear sounds and then apply these in their pre-reading skills. Children's acquisition of phonics knowledge leading to reading is a high priority. Children tend to progress well in this area, which prepares them well for the transition to Year 1. However, writing skills lag slightly behind.

Liaison with parents is effective. Parents are complimentary about the care and provision their children receive.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Pupils' personal development and wellbeing are a high priority. Pupils benefit from a nurturing pastoral programme that is personalised to the individual. Staff understand that pupils need to feel a sense of wellbeing and belonging before they can thrive academically and socially. Pupils who are new to the school settle in quickly. The school has developed an appropriate programme for personal development that begins in early years, preparing pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils develop a keen moral compass. They develop a sense of tolerance and respect for those with any perceived difference. As part of an inter-faith week, for example, pupils benefit from a range of visitors to school from different faiths and religions. This enhances their appreciation of cultural diversity and spirituality.

The personal development programme takes into account local contextual risks. For example, pupils are taught about the dangers of the nearby Metro lines. They know how to stay safe, both online and offline. As a result of the consistent implementation of the relationships education programme, pupils have an appropriate understanding of healthy relationships. Pupils typically have an appropriate understanding of British values and protected characteristics. They understand that discrimination of any kind should not be tolerated.

Many pupils benefit from a wider programme of educational visits and extra-curricular activities. These include cooking, the robotics club and visits to a local Roman fort. These opportunities supplement and enhance the academic curriculum and the personal development programme, nurturing pupils' talents and interests. Leaders look to remove any barriers to participation for disadvantaged pupils as far as possible. However, leaders acknowledge that this could be extended further to ensure that as many pupils as possible have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of rich and rewarding experiences and opportunities.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils at Wardley Primary are cheerful and happy. They feel safe here. They embody pride in their school, blossoming in the very inclusive environment that leaders have crafted over time. The school's commitment to creating a highly supportive place for pupils to be the best they can be is clear. Pupils speak warmly about the school and the staff. Positive relationships abound. The pastoral support for pupils has significant impact, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, pupils who benefit from the 'Star Suite' provision love to welcome visitors into their setting and enjoy every opportunity to succeed.

Pupils enjoy learning. From low starting points in many cases, pupils generally achieve well. Pupils eligible for the government's pupil premium funding achieve particularly well in reading and mathematics by the end of key stage 2. Leaders and staff seek to identify pupils' barriers to learning and minimise these wherever possible. However, some pupils do not achieve as well as they might in writing before they move to secondary school.

In line with the school's values, behaviour is typically respectful. Younger children in early years, for example, investigate 'potions' together. They share resources and collaborate well in their play. Bullying is exceptionally rare. Attendance is high. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

There are a number of wider opportunities for pupils to benefit from. Over a number of years, groups of pupils have travelled abroad to compete in a robotics competition, for example. Others develop their surfing skills at Tynemouth. These experiences foster a sense of belonging and inclusion. Leaders are aware that they can improve this offer further so that more pupils benefit from these rewarding experiences.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that they continue to embed highly effective teaching of writing to secure key foundational knowledge so that the overall quality of writing improves and pupils are better prepared for the next stage of education.
 - Leaders should further tailor the personal development curriculum so that all pupils have access to, and participate in, a wide range of high-quality experiences beyond the taught curriculum.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Councillor Sharron Potts.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other staff during the inspection. They also spoke with members of the local governing body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils, visited a sample of lessons and looked at pupils' work across a number of curriculum subjects.

The school makes use of one registered alternative provision.

Headteacher: Nicola Wallace

Lead inspector:

Richard Beadnall, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

David Bailey, Ofsted Inspector

Sue Richardson, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 6 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

289

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

315

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

44.02%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

3.81%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

17.99%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Close to average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	63%	61%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25	70%	62%	Close to average
2023/24	69%	61%	Above
2022/23	54%	60%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	82%	74%	Above
2024/25	94%	75%	Above
2023/24	81%	74%	Close to average
2022/23	73%	73%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	73%	72%	Close to average
2024/25	73%	72%	Close to average
2023/24	81%	72%	Above
2022/23	68%	71%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	80%	73%	Above
2024/25	94%	74%	Above
2023/24	81%	73%	Above
2022/23	68%	73%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	43%	46%	Close to average
2024/25	47%	47%	Close to average
2023/24	44%	46%	Close to average
2022/23	38%	44%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	71%	62%	Above
2024/25	88%	63%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24	56%	62%	Close to average
2022/23	63%	60%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	55%	59%	Close to average
2024/25	53%	59%	Close to average
2023/24	67%	58%	Close to average
2022/23	50%	58%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	69%	60%	Above
2024/25	88%	61%	Above
2023/24	67%	59%	Close to average
2022/23	50%	59%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	43%	68%	-25 pp
2024/25	47%	69%	-22 pp
2023/24	44%	67%	-23 pp
2022/23	38%	66%	-29 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	71%	80%	-8 pp
2024/25	88%	81%	7 pp
2023/24	56%	80%	-24 pp
2022/23	63%	78%	-16 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	55%	78%	-23 pp
2024/25	53%	78%	-25 pp
2023/24	67%	78%	-11 pp
2022/23	50%	77%	-27 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	69%	80%	-11 pp
2024/25	88%	81%	8 pp
2023/24	67%	79%	-13 pp
2022/23	50%	79%	-29 pp

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 terms)	4.8%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24	5.0%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23	4.9%	5.9%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 terms)	14.2%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24	10.5%	14.6%	Below
2022/23	11.3%	16.2%	Below

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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