

Inspection of a good school: Walbottle Village Primary School

The Green, Walbottle Village, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE15 8JL

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 June 2024

Outcome

Walbottle Village Primary School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Alison Oliver. This school is part of Valour Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Dame Nicola Stephenson DBE, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Kate Chisholm.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's aim to develop 'safe, happy and loved' pupils is brought to life each day at Walbottle Village Primary School. From the day that children join the school in nursery, relationships between adults and pupils are warm and respectful. Pupils are proud to be a part of the school family and enjoy all that the school has to offer.

Over time, pupils learn to be strong ambassadors for equality, difference and fairness. They say, 'You can be who you want to be at our school.' As a result, pupils work well together in lessons and play harmoniously in the school grounds at breaktimes. Pupils' behaviour at all points of the day is excellent. Pupils say that bullying is rare, but if it were to happen, it would be stamped out quickly.

The school also has high expectations for pupils' academic achievement. Pupils experience a seamless curriculum journey from early years to Year 6. Staff work relentlessly to ensure that all pupils, regardless of any additional special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), experience the full benefits of the curriculum. Consequently, pupils achieve well across the full range of subjects.

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

Adults and pupils welcome everyone at this inclusive school. Staff quickly identify if pupils have any additional SEND needs. They work with families and pupils to understand the barriers that they may face to access the school's curriculum. Provision is carefully monitored to ensure that pupils and staff have all that they need to succeed.

In all subjects, the school has crafted the curriculum to ensure that pupils learn the knowledge and skills that they need to achieve well. Pupils use their prior learning with confidence, across the range of subjects. For example, in geography, Year 2 pupils use their knowledge of map work when planning a route around the world to visit famous landmarks. Year 6 pupils use their knowledge of physical features when writing a detailed response about land usage in Russia. In mathematics, the approach to securing pupils' knowledge of number facts is well embedded. Pupils work towards 'maths badges' linked to number facts, such as times tables, or mental addition and subtraction. Pupils wear the badges that they have earned with pride. They apply this knowledge automatically in their written mathematics work.

Pupils experience a highly structured phonics curriculum when learning to read. Staff help those who struggle to keep up with the programme to catch up with their peers. They identify which phonics sounds pupils do not know and provide swift support. Despite this intervention, some pupils in the earliest stages of learning to read do not become fluent readers quickly enough. These pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise reading words containing the sounds they know at pace. Some pupils overly rely on segmenting and blending words. This hampers their understanding of what has been read. Throughout their time at school, however, pupils develop a love of reading. They read to relax, for fun and to learn. The reading curriculum opens up a world of authors and types of reading materials. In lessons, older pupils discuss their reading with enthusiasm and understanding.

Pupils' wider development is the cornerstone of the school. Leaders balance academic outcomes with pupils' personal development expertly. Pupils thrive socially. A great deal of thought is placed on ensuring that the school provides pupils with the widest opportunities possible. Pupils experience a range of trips, visits and visitors throughout their school life. They also work towards 'badges' linked to life skills, such as riding a bike, dressing themselves or speaking in public. The school also promotes a deep sense of charity. The school's sponsored cancer care ambulance is adorned with pupils' work to brighten the journey for those who use it.

Most pupils' attendance is high. One parent's view reflected that of many when they said that their child 'raced in to school from day one!' This is not the case for some others. The school works effectively with families and other agencies to support some pupils to improve their attendance.

The school, trust and those responsible for governance unite to continue to improve the school. All seek excellence. Appropriate checks are made on key areas of responsibility, such as staff workload, SEND, attendance and safeguarding. Some policies and procedures, however, require a review. Some have not been updated regularly enough over time and do not fully reflect current statutory guidance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils in the early stages of learning to read rely too much on segmenting and blending. This is hindering some pupils from learning to read with fluency and understanding. The school should support pupils to develop fluency when reading words containing the phonics sounds they know.
- Systems for ensuring that school and trust policies and procedures reflect current statutory expectations are inconsistent. Some policies and procedures do not fully meet current requirements. The school should work with the trust to ensure that clear mechanisms are in place to routinely review policies and procedures against the latest statutory guidance.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2019.

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	144559
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10346696
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	172
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kate Chisholm
CEO of the trust	Dame Nicola Stephenson DBE
Headteacher	Alison Oliver
Website	www.walbottlevillage.newcastle.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	14 and 15 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school currently uses one alternative education provider.
- The school provides a breakfast club for its pupils.
- The school is part of Valour Multi-Academy Trust.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector listened to pupils read from Reception Class and Years 1, 2 and 3.
- As part of the inspection, the inspector held discussions with school leaders, members of the school's local advisory board, the chair of trustees and the CEO of the trust.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour during lessons visits and at playtime. The inspector also spoke with groups of pupils.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents provided by the school, such as the policies that the school follows, the school self-evaluation and school improvement planning.
- The inspector considered the responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including the free-text responses. The inspector also reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil questionnaires and met with staff to discuss their workload and well-being.

Inspection team

Mark Dent, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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