

# Inspection of Walgrave Primary School

Kettering Road, Walgrave, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN6 9PH

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Inspection dates: 22 and 23 October 2024

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Walgrave Primary School promotes fun and happiness for its pupils. As well as having fun, pupils are encouraged to respect and care for each other. They are encouraged to be responsible by making good choices. Pupils try hard to live up to these high expectations.

Pupils get on really well with each other. Older pupils look after their younger 'buddies' on the playground. The 'sports crew' designs games for them to play.

Pupils achieve well, as reflected in the outcomes of statutory assessments. The school wants pupils to do well in all aspects of their development. Staff support pupils to work towards completion of the '100 things' the school has identified to help develop pupils' character. This supports pupils to be confident individuals.

A range of extra-curricular clubs grow pupils' talents. Pupils enjoy sports and singing. They take part in many competitions and events over the year. For example, the 'Strictly Dance' club recently took part in the finals of a dancing competition.

The school is proud to be a 'healthy school' and prioritises mental well-being. Some pupils are 'healthy mind, healthy body' ambassadors, who help maintain positive thinking. They provide a listening ear and run dance exercise sessions.

Overwhelmingly, parents feel that children are safe, happy and do well here.

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

Reading is at the heart of the school's curriculum. Learning to read fluently is a priority. Staff are well trained to deliver the phonics programme. Children get off to a flying start with this in the early years. Their confidence quickly grows. The less confident pupils are well supported. Younger pupils really enjoy reading practice sessions. The engaging books are carefully matched to the sounds that they know. Older pupils avidly discuss the entertaining novels being read in their classes. Pupils love reading. The 'Enchanted Woods' library, by the playground, is often busy, including at lunchtimes and after school. Trained pupil librarians manage the books and make recommendations.

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum that engages pupils. For each subject, the school has specified the important knowledge that pupils need to learn. This knowledge is set out in a logical order to build pupils' knowledge over time. Knowledge is often linked through interesting topics that encourage pupils to connect ideas. Recently, the school introduced mixed-age classes in the younger year groups. The curriculum for these year groups was revised. When this curriculum is being implemented, what Reception-age children should learn is sometimes not made clear enough. As a result, the activities provided do not fully support what children should learn. Additionally, staff do not focus on the right vocabulary in their conversations with children to support the intended learning.

Generally, the curriculum is implemented well. Teaching clearly explains new concepts. Pupils' understanding is checked and there are opportunities to revisit misconceptions. Pupils are encouraged to use important and ambitious vocabulary. Pupils use this effectively in their writing. Teachers adapt activities to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. Pupils with SEND have extra support that enables them to enjoy an ambitious curriculum. Teaching often encourages pupils to retrieve what they learned previously. This helps pupils remember. Pupils mainly recall well. However, sometimes, the questions asked and activities provided do not help pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding. As a result, pupils sometimes forget what they were taught.

Pupils have positive attitudes towards their work. They behave well. Pupils are encouraged to keep a check on how they are feeling. They are supported to regulate their emotions. Pupils use the 'calming corner' or the 'sensory circuit' when needed.

The opportunities for pupils' personal development are well considered. Pupils learn how to keep healthy and stay safe. The school places a strong emphasis on citizenship. Pupils learn how the rule of law and democracy work in their school. They are keen to contribute to the school community. They write letters to apply for one of the many roles of responsibility. Pupils value the trust staff place on them. They carry out their roles responsibly.

The school has experienced and is currently going through a period of further changes in leadership. Some of these changes were unexpected. Parents are very supportive of the school's work but, understandably, some have concerns about continuity and how this has been communicated by the school. Leaders, including the governing body, have an accurate view of the school's strengths and priorities. They are getting the right support to maintain strengths and to continue to improve. Leadership is strengthened by mutual support within the federation.

Staff love working at the school. Their well-being is prioritised. They feel very well supported. Most are relishing the development opportunities brought by recent changes.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Occasionally, the intended learning for the Reception-age children is not as clearly defined as it needs to be within the mixed-age curriculum. When this is the case, staff do not focus on the right vocabulary or do not provide the right activities that support the intended learning. As a result, children are not fully supported to build their learning as well as they could. The school should ensure that what Reception-age children need to learn is clearly defined and that children are well supported to learn it.

- Teaching sometimes does not provide activities or ask questions that help pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the intended curriculum. As a result, pupils sometimes cannot recall what they have been taught. The school should ensure that pupils are appropriately challenged to build a secure body of knowledge in all subjects.
- The school is going through a period of significant change. Some parents are uncertain of the school's work to ensure changes do not impact negatively on their child's education. The school should ensure that changes and the school's work are effectively communicated to parents.

## 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

|                                            |                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 121864                                                             |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | West Northamptonshire                                              |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10347451                                                           |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                                                            |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community                                                          |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4 to 11                                                            |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                                              |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 134                                                                |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                                                 |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Alan Denton                                                        |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Natasha Bates                                                      |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.walgraveschool.org">www.walgraveschool.org</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 12 September 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005       |

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Walgrave and Pitsford Primary Schools Federation. The two schools share a governing body and an executive headteacher. However, the most recent executive headteacher left in July 2024.
- The governing body appointed the current acting headteacher in September 2024.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders of the school and considered a range of documentation.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives into the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspectors: 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.
- An inspector listened as pupils read to a familiar adult. Inspectors also considered evidence about some other curriculum subjects.
- 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.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site during breaktime.
- The inspectors spoke with groups of pupils and staff. Inspectors spoke to parents and considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and for pupils.

## Inspection team

Claire Stylianides, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Elizabeth Mace

Ofsted Inspector

Debonair Brown

Ofsted Inspector

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