

Wargrave CofE Primary School

Bradlegh Road, Newton-Le-Willows, Merseyside WA12 8QL

Inspection dates

9–10 March 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not taken effective action to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently strong across all subjects and all year groups.
- Systems to check on the progress that pupils make are not effective in shining a light on those groups of pupils that are vulnerable to falling behind.
- Governors do not hold leaders to account for the impact of their actions.
- The progress that pupils make in mathematics is not consistently good across the school. In some classes pupils do not make the progress that they are capable of.
- Leaders' plans for improvement do not get to the heart of the matter and have not been fully effective in improving outcomes for pupils, particularly in mathematics.

The school has the following strengths

- An exciting curriculum hooks pupils' interests and develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well.
- The recently appointed acting deputy headteachers have begun to take decisive action to tackle weaknesses in leadership and management.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They are taught how to protect themselves from bullying and understand how to keep safe when online. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) is effective across the early years and Key Stage 1.
- Strong teaching and leadership in the early years ensures that children get a good start to their education.
- Pupils make a very positive and highly valued contribution to their local community.
- Almost every parent who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire would recommend the school to another parent.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - putting into place robust systems to track the progress that all groups of pupils make
 - ensuring that checks on the quality of teaching are used effectively to precisely identify strengths and weaknesses and consequently inform plans for improvement
 - making sure that governors ask the challenging questions required to fully hold leaders to account for their actions.

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that teachers use what they know about pupils' previous learning to provide lessons in mathematics that challenge all groups of pupils effectively
 - making sure that the school marking and feedback policy is used consistently across the school.

- Improve pupil outcomes by:
 - ensuring that all pupils make the progress that they are capable of in mathematics
 - making sure that the gap in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally narrows rapidly.

An external review of governance should be undertaken so that this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders and governors of the school have not taken the actions required to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning across the school is consistently good. As a consequence, the progress that pupils make, particularly in mathematics, falls below that which they are capable of in a number of classes.
- Checks on the quality of teaching and learning have not been used effectively to identify accurately the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Evidence of lesson observations shows that feedback to teachers lacks precision. As a consequence, teachers have not always been given the advice and support needed to help them to improve their skills.
- Systems to track pupils' progress and the standards that they reach are not fully useful in enabling leaders to accurately identify those groups of pupils who are achieving well or who are falling behind. The progress that pupils who have special educational needs make, for example, is not adequately summarised. As a result, governors and leaders are not able to accurately judge the impact that the provision for this group of pupils is having.
- Leaders' plans to improve the school are variable in quality and sometimes do not focus on the areas of most importance. Consequently their impact has not brought about the changes required to improve outcomes for pupils, particularly in mathematics and at the end of Key Stage 1.
- Despite the shortcomings in the quality of leadership and management, there is now a renewed determination and ambition to set about driving forward improvements. The two newly appointed acting deputy headteachers, in a short period time, have brought about a number of changes. Meetings to discuss the progress that pupils make, for instance, are now being used effectively to hold teachers to account, identify and discuss those pupils at risk of falling behind and plan actions to rapidly put into place the support that these pupils need.
- By appointing a new mathematics subject leader, current leaders in school have taken decisive action to tackle the lack of effective leadership in this area. In a very short space of time, the new mathematics subject leader has used initial checks on the quality of pupils' work to accurately identify areas for improvement and plan actions to tackle these.
- A rich and relevant curriculum develops pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding effectively across a broad range of subjects. Well-chosen questions, such as 'How lavish was London during the time of Shakespeare?' serve to ignite pupils' interests and promote learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural understanding is promoted effectively. Music is given prominence in the curriculum. Pupils are proud of the opportunities they have to support their community by singing at local hospitals and residential settings for the elderly. Pupils develop their understanding of other cultures through studying what life is like in other countries such as Mexico. The school also has links with a primary school in South Africa.
- Fundamental British values are promoted very well across the school. A bright and attractive display at the school entrance showcases a range of pupils' work that develops their understanding of respect, democracy and tolerance. A poignant and high-quality remembrance tile mosaic, created by pupils, further promotes an understanding of the sacrifices made by members of the armed services and how they relate to freedom.
- Sports funding is used effectively by leaders. Specialist sports coaches teach physical educational lessons, enabling class teachers to observe their practice and consequently improve their subject knowledge and confidence. Information provided by the school shows that in many classes 100% of pupils have attended extra-curricular clubs, including aerobics and running. Many parents who responded to Parent View (the Ofsted online questionnaire) praised the school for the multitude of extra-curricular clubs that are available.
- Pupil premium funding is spent on a broad range of initiatives, including speech and language therapy, providing a before- and after-school club and employing a number of learning support staff. As a result, for the past three years, disadvantaged pupils have made overall progress that is broadly in line with other pupils nationally by the time they leave the school. However, current systems for tracking this group of pupils lack rigour. As a result, leaders and governors are not in a position to fully evaluate the impact of this funding across the whole school.

- The local authority has provided very effective support to the school during the absence of the

headteacher. The regular presence of a senior officer has ensured that leaders have been given the guidance and advice required to begin to implement improvements and sustain staff morale.

■ **The governance of the school**

- Discussions with governors and evidence from records of meetings shows that members of the governing body have not asked enough challenging questions to enable them to hold leaders to account for the impact of their actions. As a result, governors have not been able to fully evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the school or make decisions based on an accurate view of the school.
- Governors are aware of their previous oversights and are now regular visitors to school. They are developing a clearer picture of what needs to be done to improve things and the urgency required. Teachers and leaders who spoke to inspectors welcome the support that the governing body have provided since the headteacher has been absent from school.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The governor with responsibility for this area robustly checks school records to ensure that all staff are suitably trained to recognise the signs of abuse. Systems for reporting any concerns are fully in place and are understood by all. Weekly meetings of the senior leadership team, to discuss any concerns, help to ensure that appropriate actions are swiftly taken to support vulnerable pupils. The work undertaken by the learning mentor is highly valued and effective at keeping children safe. However, opportunities for her to discuss and reflect upon her workload with an appropriately qualified supervisor are not currently in place.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently strong across all classes and subjects in the school. In mathematics particularly, some teachers do not use what they know about pupils' previous learning to deliver lessons that provide appropriate challenge. As a consequence, learning stalls as pupils repeat work that they have already demonstrated a thorough understanding of.
- Weaknesses in the quality of teaching of mathematics are not seen in every class. In several classes, teachers are beginning to use problem solving and investigative activities to deepen pupils' understanding of mathematical ideas. In Year 5, for instance, pupils' learning moved forward effectively when their teacher posed the question 'Do all square numbers have exactly three factors? Convince me.'
- Teachers use their assessment of what pupils can do more effectively in other subjects. In a Year 2 English lesson, for example, the class teacher checked pupils' understanding of irregular verbs throughout the session, ensuring that any misconceptions were quickly addressed. As a result, pupils acquired and embedded new skills quickly.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in their writing. Bright and attractive displays of pupils' writing abound throughout the school, celebrating success and promoting this aspect of the curriculum. Pupils use their good understanding of the effect of language to improve their work. In a Year 3 lesson, for instance, pupils used adjectives and prepositions effectively when redrafting their work.
- Learning support assistants are generally utilised well to support pupils across the school. They use questioning effectively to help pupils think for themselves and deepen their understanding. In a Year 3 lesson pupils improved their writing because the learning support assistant prompted pupils to think about powerful synonyms and why they would use them. However, in a small number of classes support is less effective because learning support assistants are not given specific tasks or clear direction by the class teacher.
- The marking of pupils' work identifies and corrects errors such as punctuation and spelling mistakes accurately. However, the school policy of giving pupils the opportunity to respond to teachers' questions and suggestions for improvements is not applied consistently across the school. As a result, some marking is not fully effective in helping pupils improve their work.
- Handwriting is taught well across the school. Pupils take pride in the quality of the presentation of their work and apply their skills across a broad range of subjects.
- Personalised one to one online tuition helps a significant number of Year 6 pupils plug gaps in their mathematical knowledge and understanding. Pupils state that they enjoy this aspect of their learning because it gives them greater confidence and helps them to become better mathematicians.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are proud of their school and of the work that they produce. A number of older pupils, for example, arrived at their meeting with an inspector with topic work that they were eager to share.
- The positive contribution that pupils make to the wider local community is excellent. Year 6 pupils, for instance, undertake a 'dawn patrol' on their way to school to check upon the well-being of a number of elderly neighbours. The recent and very well attended coffee morning, organised by the pupils, exemplifies the high regard that the recipients of this initiative hold for the pupils.
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors say that they are regularly taught about the different forms of bullying and the impact it has on others. As a result, pupils state that bullying incidents are rare at their school. Leaders ensure that all bullying incidents are recorded and dealt with effectively. However, these records are not kept in a systematic way. As a result, leaders and governors are not able to fully analyse the effectiveness of any actions that they take to tackle bullying at the school.
- Pupils are able to discuss a range of issues with maturity and sensitivity. Pupils in Key Stage 2 were able to suggest how teachers might support a very small number of pupils who find friendships difficult to maintain when they join the school at different points during the school year.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Visitors to the school, such as the NSPCC, deliver assemblies that help pupils to understand how to stay safe from abuse. Pupils are regularly taught about e-safety and can explain how to keep safe when online. Year 6 pupils, for example, designed their own web page during e-safety week to help others understand how to stay safe.
- Pupils are proud of the role that they play in helping the school to improve. Bike racks have been installed in the playground as a result of feedback from the school council. The head boy and head girl are exemplary ambassadors for the school and act as strong role models for other pupils.
- A large number of parents who spoke to parents and commented on Parent View praised the personal development of pupils at the school. One comment from a parent that was typical of others stated: 'The teachers at this school are amazing. They have nurtured and supported my children throughout the school.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Classrooms are calm and pupils display good attitudes to their learning. However, when activities do not fully challenge them a very small number of pupils can occasionally become distracted. As one pupil realistically explained, 'We can sometimes chat but we know when it is time to stop and get on with our work.'
- Adults act as excellent role models and have nurtured highly positive relationships with pupils. As a result, pupils listen attentively during most lessons and respond to adults and each other politely and with respect.
- Pupils behave equally well on the playground. They generally play sensibly and get along well with each other. Year 6 buddies help younger pupils enjoy games by joining in and leading activities.
- Pupils enjoy school and value their education. As a result, overall attendance is in line with that seen nationally. In 2015 the proportion of pupils absent regularly (persistent absence) was above the national average. However, current absence data shows an improving picture, with fewer pupils absent often.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- The progress that current pupils make in mathematics is not consistently strong across the school. In some classes pupils do not make the progress that they are capable of. Evidence in pupils' books shows that this is because the work that pupils are given is sometimes not well matched to their needs.
- Teachers' strong subject knowledge and consistently good teaching, ensures that pupils develop a secure understanding of phonics. During a lesson in the Reception class, for example, children were able to sound out and then write two syllable words such as cobweb and lunchbox. As a consequence, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check has been above the national average for the past three years.
- From their starting points, pupils make the progress expected of them in reading so that they leave the school reaching standards that are broadly in line with those seen nationally. Those pupils that read to

inspectors were able to apply their phonics skills to read difficult words, and most read with fluency. During a reading assembly, observed during the inspection, pupils demonstrated an enjoyment of reading and were proud of the certificates they received for progressing up 'the colour rainbow'. However, a small number of pupils who spoke to inspectors stated that they didn't get enough opportunities to visit the school library to choose books that interest them.

- Typically teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in writing and plan work that meets their needs, building on previous learning. Pupils' books show that they apply their writing skills successfully across a range of subjects and genres. Displays of writing such as 'Arthur, High King of Britain' celebrate pupils' work and serve as an example to inspire others. As a result, pupils make progress and reach standards that are broadly in line with the national average by the time they leave Key Stage 2.
- Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress. In lessons observed, learning support assistants were utilised effectively to ensure that learning for this group of pupils moved forward well. For the past three years, pupils from this group have made progress in reading, writing and mathematics that is above that of other pupils nationally.
- Disadvantaged pupils make progress in reading and writing that is broadly similar to other pupils nationally. However, as with other pupils in school, the progress that they make in mathematics is not as strong. In 2015, the gap in the standards that disadvantaged pupils reached by the end of Year 6, compared to other pupils nationally, in reading, writing and mathematics widened.

Early years provision

is good

- Due to good teaching and leadership, children make a strong start to their education at the school. Children enter the Nursery with skills that are below those typical for their age. They make sustained and strong progress throughout the early years, so that by the time they leave the Reception class the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is above the national average. Consequently, children are well prepared to face the challenges of Year 1.
- Teachers use what they know about children's prior learning and interests to plan activities that ignite their enthusiasm for learning. In the Reception class, for example, learning leapt forward as children joined in with a game of 'What's the time Mr Wolf?'
- A bright and stimulating learning environment promotes reading and writing well. In the Nursery class, for instance, pupils enjoyed developing their writing skills as they 'took bookings' in the travel agent role play area.
- Children's independence, confidence and self-esteem are taught very effectively across the early years. Children develop a broad range of skills in their exciting outdoor lessons that take place in the woods.
- Adults promote and model social and emotional skills very well. Children sustain good levels of concentration on their chosen tasks and play well with their peers. They share resources kindly and are sensible to take turns. In the Reception class children enjoyed working together to build helicopters and vans in the construction area.
- Teachers and learning support assistants use questioning very effectively to help deepen children's learning and probe understanding. Learning during a writing lesson moved forward rapidly as children discussed with their teacher which foods could be added to their healthy food list.
- Leadership of the early years is strong. The early years leader has developed a cohesive team of staff who all share the same aspirational ambitions for the children. Relationships with parents are good. Weekly parental phonics workshops give support and advice so that learning is supported at home. Assessments of children's skills are accurate. However, in some cases written assessments do not contain enough detail or clearly identify next steps for learning.
- Children are well supervised by diligent staff. Procedures for keeping children safe are effective and reflect those seen throughout the school.

School details

Unique reference number	104787
Local authority	St Helens
Inspection number	10011041

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	308
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Frank Cooke
Headteacher	Mrs Susan Wade
Telephone number	01744678720
Website	www.wargraveprimary.org.uk/
Email address	wargrave@sthelens.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	9–10 May 2011

Information about this school

- Wargrave CofE Primary School is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- The headteacher was absent during the inspection.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is almost double the national average. (The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, and those who are looked after by the local authority.)
- Most pupils are from a White British heritage and most pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is above the national average.
- In 2015 the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There is an on-site breakfast club and after-school provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in each class of the school, including with senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, members of staff, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, behaviour, school improvement planning, assessment information and reports on the quality of teaching.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally during the school day and observed them during playtime and lunchtime. They also met formally with pupils to talk about their learning and behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors listened to a number of pupils read.
- A range of pupils' books were checked.
- Inspectors spoke to a small number of parents at the start of the day. They also took account of the 67 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also took note of the 37 responses they received to the inspection questionnaire for school staff as well as the 13 responses they received to the online inspection questionnaire for school pupils.
- Three further Ofsted inspectors joined the inspection at the start of the second day.

Inspection team

Martin Bell, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Linda Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector
Saeeda Ishaq	Ofsted Inspector
Doreen Davenport	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2016

