

Inspection of North Walkden Primary School

Worsley Road North, Walkden, Worsley, Manchester M28 3QD

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 March 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this school. They have lots of friends and they trust the adults in school to listen to any worries that they may have. Pupils feel confident in talking about their feelings and they know that staff care about them. This helps them to feel happy.

Pupils understand the school's high expectations of their behaviour. They make every effort to 'Reach for the Stars' and follow their 'School Promise'. Pupils are proud to receive 'star of the week' and playtime awards in recognition of this.

The school has high aspirations for pupils' achievement. However, pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This is because, over time, they have not benefited from a curriculum that builds their knowledge securely. This is also true of the curriculum for children in the early years. In addition, some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not receive the support that they need to succeed.

Pupils value the range of opportunities beyond the academic on offer to them. They were keen to talk about debating, archery, calligraphy and art clubs that they have enjoyed. Pupils were proud of their recent success in a local handball tournament.

Pupils who represent their classmates on the school council, or have other responsibilities in school, take their roles seriously. They are proud to make a positive difference to their school and community. For example, they collect donations for local foodbanks, research which plants to grow to attract bees to the school grounds and raise funds for the school through bake sales.

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

The school has an ambitious vision for what pupils can achieve. However, it has not realised this vision in full. The school has identified what pupils should learn and organised knowledge in a logical order from Years 1 to 6. In the early years, instabilities in staffing have hindered the school's work to improve the curriculum for children. Currently, the curriculum in the early years does not enable children to build on their prior learning and vocabulary well enough. This means that children are not as well prepared as they should be for the Reception Year and Year 1.

In some subjects, most pupils build their knowledge successfully. They can remember their previous learning, which gives them a foundation to learn new content. However, in some other subjects, including mathematics, staff do not address pupils' misconceptions or gaps in their knowledge consistently before they move on to new learning. This prevents some pupils from learning as well as they should.

The school has prioritised supporting pupils to develop a love of reading. There are enticing book areas across the school. Children in the Nursery class are introduced

to stories and rhymes. Older pupils are motivated to seek 'golden tickets' in their reading books. These tickets allow them to attend 'tea parties' with the headteacher to discuss the books that they are reading.

The phonics programme supports pupils to gain a secure knowledge of phonics. Pupils who need extra help with reading get additional opportunities to practise the sounds that they do not know. However, the school has not kept a close eye on how well the phonics programme is implemented. As a result, the school has not identified or addressed some of the inconsistencies in staff's delivery of the programme. Additionally, pupils sometimes read from books that are not suitably matched to the sounds that they already know. This means that some pupils, particularly those who find reading difficult, do not become confident, fluent readers as quickly as they should.

Pupils with SEND are identified by staff at the earliest opportunity. They access the same curriculum as their peers. However, at times, staff are not confident in adapting how they deliver the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.

Pupils are polite, friendly and caring towards each other. The atmosphere throughout school is calm and purposeful. The school has identified the reasons for the low attendance rates of some pupils. It is taking effective action to provide support for these pupils and their families. As a result, pupils' who had low prior attendance are attending school more regularly.

The school provides pupils with rich experiences that support their wider development. Pupils know how to look after their own physical and mental health. They have an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships. Pupils value and respect the many differences that exist between themselves and others.

Governors understand their responsibilities. They carry out their statutory duties appropriately. Staff spoke positively about how the school considers their well-being. For example, when policies are reviewed, alongside consideration of staff workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has not ensured that some pupils' misconceptions or gaps in learning are addressed before they move on to new learning. This means that some pupils' learning is not as secure as it should be. The school should check that pupils have successfully embedded the prior knowledge that they need before they move on to learning new content.

- The early years curriculum is at an early stage of development. This means that staff are unclear about the most important knowledge that children should learn. This impacts how well children build their knowledge over time. The school should ensure that the curriculum in the early years sets out the important knowledge and vocabulary that children need in readiness for their future learning.
- The school has not ensured that staff implement the phonics programme consistently well. Pupils are sometimes given books that are not well matched to their current phonics knowledge. This hinders some pupils' progress in becoming fluent readers. The school should ensure that pupils read from books that are well matched to their needs and that staff deliver the phonics programme consistently well.
- The school has not ensured that staff are well equipped to meet the additional needs of some pupils with SEND. Some staff are not confident in adapting how they deliver the curriculum to meet the needs of these pupils. This prevents some pupils with SEND from achieving well. The school should ensure that staff receive appropriate guidance, to enable them to meet these pupils' individual needs effectively.

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	105922
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	10294239
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	225
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	William Shaw
Headteacher	Helen Warburton
Website	www.northwalkdenprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 July 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been several changes to the school's staffing and to the membership of the governing body since the last inspection.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, inspectors had discussions about the

curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors spoke with subject leaders and pupils about their learning in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed pupils from key stages 1 and 2 read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other school leaders. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. She also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors talked with staff and leaders about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for attendance, behaviour, early years, the provision for pupils with SEND and pupils' personal development.
- 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.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their wider experiences of school. They looked at a range of documents related to pupils' welfare and education. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day. They took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Rebecca Jewitt, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David Woodhouse

Ofsted Inspector

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