

Wardley Primary School

URN: 108371 | Inspected: 06 January 2026

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.

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.

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

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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.

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.

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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

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.

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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.

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

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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.

For detailed performance data including disadvantage gap analysis, historical trends, and comparison tables, visit the school's profile on WhatSchool:

<https://whatschool.ai/en/school/wardley-primary-school-gateshead>