School report

Inspection of Our Lady of Walsingham Primary School

Stand Park Avenue, Netherton, Bootle, Merseyside L30 3SA

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 April 2022

Overall effectiveness	**Requires improvement**
The quality of education	**Requires improvement**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Requires improvement**
Leadership and management	**Requires improvement**
Early years provision	**Requires improvement**
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy their time at Our Lady of Walsingham Primary School. They benefit from positive relationships with each other and with staff. Pupils said that they make lots of friends and that they feel safe and happy in school.

Pupils told inspectors that the staff in the school are kind and helpful. Pupils value the opportunity to talk to staff if they have any worries. Pupils are confident that staff will sort out any concerns that they report quickly, including about bullying. Pupils understand leaders' clear expectations of their behaviour and follow the school code, 'respect, safety and kindness'. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), behave well in lessons and around the school.

Pupils enjoy learning and they work hard in lessons. However, in some subjects, pupils, including children in the early years, do not achieve as well as they should because curriculums are not well thought out by leaders.

Pupils are proud to help others by raising funds for a local food bank. They are excited to take part in the sports events that leaders plan for them. Older pupils appreciate the opportunities that they have to take part in residential visits.

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

Leaders are in the process of reviewing the curriculum to ensure that it is suitably broad and ambitious for all pupils, including pupils with SEND. Until recently, leaders have not ensured that the curriculum has been ambitious enough for pupils, including children in the early years. This has prevented pupils from achieving as well as they should.

In some subjects, such as mathematics, leaders are clear about the knowledge that pupils need to learn and the order in which they should learn it. In these subjects, leaders provide clear guidance for staff about what to teach and when to teach it. This helps teachers to design learning that builds on pupils' earlier knowledge.

While some subjects are planned well, leaders' curriculum thinking in other subjects is not as far along. In these subjects, leaders' expectations of what pupils, including children in the early years, should know are not clear enough. This hinders teachers from presenting content in a logical order so as to help children and pupils gain the key knowledge they need to progress well over time. It also prevents leaders from checking that pupils know and remember their earlier learning.

In addition, some subject leaders do not provide support for teachers to develop their subject knowledge and deliver curriculums well. This hampers teachers in their efforts to design learning effectively. Consequently, pupils do not achieve as well as they should in these subjects.

Leaders have placed a high priority on ensuring that pupils learn to read fluently. The recently introduced phonics programme has been carefully structured. Children begin to learn sounds and letters in daily sessions in the Nursery class. Leaders provide appropriate guidance so that teachers can deliver this programme consistently well. Leaders keep a close check on how well pupils know and remember the sounds they have learned and provide extra support for pupils who fall behind in reading. However, on occasion, the books selected by staff for pupils to practise reading do not match well to their phonics knowledge. This has a negative effect on pupils' confidence and delays their fluency in reading. Too few pupils can read confidently by the end of key stage 1.

Leaders have reviewed the way reading is taught in key stage 2. Older pupils are supported to develop their reading comprehension skills with daily lessons. That said, they have not benefited from the newly increased emphasis on early reading. Consequently, some pupils do not enjoy reading independently and their knowledge of books and authors is limited.

Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND are identified early. Teachers are provided with high-quality advice about effective strategies that they can adopt to ensure that this group of pupils access the same curriculum as their peers.

In early years, warm relationships with encouraging staff help children to settle in well to routines. Children are happy to share with their friends. Most pupils behave well in school and have positive attitudes to learning. Low-level disruption during lessons is unusual. However, a small number of pupils require more support and reminders to regulate their own behaviour. Leaders have acted with determination to ensure that more children attend school more regularly. As a result, attendance has improved over time.

Although pupils understand the importance of respect for all, they do not benefit from a well-planned curriculum in order to learn about the wider world. Consequently, pupils have a limited understanding of important ideas such as democracy and diversity.

Teachers told inspectors that school leaders are approachable. Staff acknowledge that leaders have engaged with them when they have raised concerns about their workload.

Members of the governing body are not well informed about the quality of the curriculum. This hinders them in being able to challenge leaders and hold them to account effectively for school improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff have regular training to help them to recognise the signs that may indicate that a pupil is at risk from or suffering harm. Leaders have a strong oversight of individual cases. They work effectively with other agencies to provide the support that vulnerable pupils and their families need.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, they have regular lessons about online safety, and through activities such as 'bikeability', they learn about how to keep themselves safe in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders, including in the early years, have not finalised their curriculum thinking in some subjects. This includes their decisions about the knowledge that children and pupils need to learn and when this should be taught. This prevents pupils from making links with new learning and building on what they already know. Leaders should ensure that teachers are clear about the essential knowledge that pupils, including in the early years, should learn and when. This will enable pupils to know more and remember more of the curriculum and deepen their understanding of these subjects over time.
- Some subject leaders lack the curriculum expertise that they need to design subject curriculums that build effectively from the early years to Year 6. This means that teachers do not receive sufficient guidance to deliver the curriculum effectively. Added to this, some subject leaders do not check that teachers are delivering the curriculum as intended. As a result, some pupils, including children in the early years, do not achieve as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that all subject leaders develop their knowledge and expertise to design coherent curriculums and support teachers to deliver these curriculums effectively.
- There are times when staff do not choose reading books for pupils that match well to pupils' phonics knowledge. This has a negative effect on pupils' confidence and delays their fluency in reading. Leaders should ensure that staff are trained appropriately to carefully select books that match the sounds that pupils are learning in class.
- Members of the governing body are not well informed about the quality of education that pupils receive. This means that they are unable to hold leaders to account as well as they should about how well pupils achieve. Governors should ensure that they have the information that they need to hold leaders to account for pupils' achievement across the curriculum.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can complain to Ofsted.

Further information

You can search for published performance information about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	132198
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	10212219
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Father Liam Collister
Headteacher	Claire McKinnon
Website	www.olwprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 May 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there has been a number of changes to staffing. Several members of staff have left the school. A new special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator and a new early years leader have recently been appointed.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The school is voluntary aided and part of the Archdiocese of Liverpool.
- The school's last section 48 inspection took place in February 2019.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and other leaders. They also spoke with subject leaders and members of staff.
- Inspectors spoke with three members of the governing body, including the vice-chair of governors. Inspectors also spoke with a representative of the local authority, a member of the Archdiocese of Liverpool and a school improvement partner.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms, during playtimes and lunchtimes and around the school. They spoke with different groups of pupils to discuss their views of the school, their learning, their behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors checked the arrangements for keeping pupils safe. They reviewed documentation, checked attendance information and spoke to leaders, governors, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also observed pupils reading to a familiar adult. Inspectors also considered aspects of a number of other subjects on the school's curriculum.
- Inspectors spoke to parents and considered the views of parents and carers shared through Ofsted Parent View. This included the comments received via the free-text facility. They also reviewed the responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation shared by school leaders, including the school development plan, the minutes taken at governors' meetings and leaders' self-evaluation document.

Inspection team

Janette Walker, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Suzanne Blay	Ofsted Inspector

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