

Ward Jackson Church of England VA Primary School

Clark Street, Hartlepool, County Durham TS24 7LE

Inspection dates

2–3 April 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher, governors and other leaders have raised standards in the school. As a result, the school's overall effectiveness is now good.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths. They are ambitious for all pupils. They are committed to improving the school further.
- The strong promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development prepares them well for life in modern Britain. In this caring and inclusive school, pupils are tolerant and respectful.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge and well-planned activities enable pupils to achieve well over time. Pupils acquire good knowledge, skills and understanding in a wide range of subjects, particularly in English and mathematics.
- The teaching of reading is a high priority. Plentiful opportunities are on offer so that pupils develop their reading skills well and access a wide range of reading materials.
- Strong leadership in the early years ensures that children benefit from teaching that engages and interests them.
- Pupils are confident and self-assured. A smile is commonplace in the school. Pupils, in the main, demonstrate positive attitudes to learning, and this contributes to their strong progress over time.
- Pupils' attendance has improved because of the concerted efforts of leaders and their close monitoring of individual pupils. Despite this, a significant minority of pupils do not attend as regularly as they should.
- Most teachers' questioning and learning activities develop pupils' ideas and understanding of different concepts. However, there are occasions when teachers' questioning and planned learning activities do not extend or deepen pupils' understanding of concepts in some subjects.
- The curriculum is broad and varied. Pupils' English and mathematics skills are well developed over time. However, despite leaders' curriculum development being well under way, pupils are not consistently challenged to delve deeply into concepts and topics in some subjects.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the wider curriculum by ensuring that:
 - pupils benefit from delving deeply into topics, concepts and ideas, so that their knowledge, skills and understanding are extended in a wide range of subjects
 - planned learning activities and teachers' questioning extend pupils' thinking about topics, concepts and ideas, so that a higher proportion of pupils reach the highest standards by the end of each phase in the school.
- Continue to improve pupils' attendance and the school's work with families, including in the early years, so that attendance is at least in line with the national average.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since their appointments, the headteacher and senior team have worked decisively and strategically. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning and, therefore, pupils' outcomes have improved since the previous inspection. Consequently, Ward Jackson Church of England VA Primary School's overall effectiveness is now good.
- The headteacher provides strong and passionate leadership. He, other leaders and governors have worked together to raise standards. They have developed a culture of high expectations and ambition for pupils.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and those areas that need to be improved. The school's self-evaluation document and development plan demonstrate a candid accuracy. As a result, leaders at all levels are in a strong position to improve the school further.
- Leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching and pupil assessment information is thorough. This provides leaders with valuable information so that they provide the right support for staff when necessary.
- Middle leaders are enthusiastic and passionate about the subjects they lead. They take a strategic role in planning so that they can continually develop and share the good practice that exists in their subjects and across the school. Consequently, pupils acquire knowledge, understanding and skills effectively in a wide range of subjects across the curriculum. For example, use of external coaching is developing pupils' physical and social skills well. Also, pupils are benefiting from more opportunities to develop their investigation and enquiry skills through the science curriculum.
- Staff are proud to be a part of the school. They feel supported by leaders and enjoy opportunities to work collaboratively with their colleagues so that pupils benefit from good teaching and support. Together, staff ensure that pupils receive timely and effective support when it is needed. As a result, current pupils are making good progress, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Leaders' use of additional funding to support pupils' learning and experiences is effective. For example, leaders and governors have a sound understanding of how the pupil premium funding is being used to overcome disadvantaged pupils' barriers, such as improving pupils' attendance and literacy skills, particularly reading. As a result, most disadvantaged pupils make good progress, although some make excellent progress over time, particularly by the end of key stage 2.
- Leadership of special educational needs is strong. Pupils' needs are identified early, so that they can be supported in a timely and appropriate manner. The work of support staff is highly effective so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well over time.
- The school's strong promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development prepares them well as young citizens. Pupils are enthusiastic when taking part in assemblies. They happily visit local care homes and show a good understanding of values such as respect and tolerance. This is a caring and inclusive school, where every child is important. Consequently, the school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.

- The school has strong links with the local authority and the diocese. The headteacher is appreciative of the regular monitoring, advice and guidance they provide.
- The curriculum is broad and varied. It contributes strongly to developing pupils' skills in English and mathematics. The curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to study a varied range of periods, events and topics. However, leaders have rightly identified that across the wider curriculum, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to explore ideas and concepts in depth when studying certain topics. Therefore, leaders have begun to review the curriculum provision so that pupils have more opportunities to be challenged to deepen their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Governance of the school

- Governors are highly committed to the school. Their passion, support and challenge are wholly evident in their words and their actions.
- Since the external review of governance, governors have quickly developed their skills so that they can thoroughly monitor and challenge important areas of leaders' work, for example the performance of pupils across a range of year groups and the effectiveness of spending.
- Governors bring a range of skills to their role. They are regular visitors to school. As a result, they have an accurate view of the strengths and those areas that need further attention.
- Governors have a good level of knowledge around safeguarding and understand their responsibilities to check safeguarding procedures thoroughly and carefully. This is particularly evident in the regular checks made on the single central record, which is meticulously maintained.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The designated safeguarding lead and those with responsibility for safeguarding keep timely and appropriate records that fully reflect the actions they have taken. Leaders and staff act quickly and decisively to ensure that pupils get the help and support they need. This includes making referrals to external agencies when appropriate.
- Staff receive regular training and weekly updates. This enables staff to be fully informed and vigilant of any possible signs or concerns. Staff know what to do should a concern or issue arise.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. Those parents and carers who completed Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire agreed that their child is safe and happy at school. Pupils are confident that if they do have an issue or worry, staff will take appropriate action to help them. Pupils say that staff care for them, and this helps them feel safe too. Pupils can share their understanding about how to be safe, for example when crossing the road or using the internet. They trust staff to keep them safe when at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. All staff expect and encourage pupils to work with positive attitudes so that they can apply themselves and make strong progress. Consequently, most pupils show positive attitudes to their learning and this is contributing to them achieving well over time.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to, in the main, plan learning activities that are interesting for pupils and which develop and consolidate pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in a range of subjects. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, a range of learning activities provided pupils with effective opportunities to demonstrate and consolidate their understanding of multiplication and problem-solving skills.
- Learning is well planned and sequenced. As a result, pupils benefit from activities that develop their learning incrementally. For example, in a Year 4 science lesson, tasks were well planned so that pupils' skills of exploring a visual representation of a spider developed. As a result, pupils could use a range of scientific words to explain the spider and how it linked to the topic of classification.
- The teaching of reading is a strength of the school. There is a firm commitment to the development of pupils' reading skills. As a result, reading is at the core of the school's curriculum. Pupils read widely and they are developing their enjoyment of reading, both at school and at home. Most pupils are confident when reading and sound out unfamiliar words with ease.
- Pupils' reading skills provide them with a solid foundation because phonics teaching is well planned and effective. Staff have good knowledge of how to teach phonics. The use of pupils' assessment information helps staff to identify and support those who need additional help to catch up. Consequently, pupils' attainment in the Year 1 phonics screening check has consistently been in line with the national averages over time.
- Support staff are highly effective. The precise deployment of support staff is enabling pupils to make stronger progress. Support staff are appropriately skilled. They check and prompt pupils' learning and develop pupils' confidence.
- Most teachers use questioning and activities effectively to gauge and develop pupils' ideas and understanding. For example, in a Year 2 English lesson, questioning from the teacher and support staff helped pupils' understanding of different sentence types being used in a descriptive piece of writing. Nonetheless, there are times, in some subjects, when staff do not take advantage of opportunities to encourage pupils to explore ideas or concepts in more depth. This is in contrast to English and mathematics. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson, pupils were effectively supported to take ideas from an extract of Charles Dickens' 'Great Expectations' and deepen their understanding of the Victorian era and the Dickensian world.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff have caring attitudes towards pupils. As a result, pupils are confident and self-assured. Pupils are proud of their school.

- Pupils are respectful and tolerant. They understand that everyone should be treated fair and equally.
- The nurture provision at the school provides identified vulnerable pupils with a caring environment. A number of pupils have accessed and benefited from this provision. Consequently, this provision contributes well to identified pupils' social and emotional development over time.
- Pupils show a good understanding of the different forms of bullying that can take place. While pupils and school records indicate that bullying does happen very occasionally, pupils know that they can speak to a member of staff if they have a worry or concern. Pupils are confident that any issue or concern would be dealt with quickly.
- Pupils are happy at school. Most develop positive attitudes towards their learning. They enjoy doing well and being rewarded for good work and demonstrating positive attitudes. Most pupils work hard. This is reflected in their work, although sometimes work presented in some pupils' books is not as neat as it could be and does not represent some of the higher standards observed in most pupils' books.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are clear about the high expectations placed upon them. The vast majority demonstrate good manners and good behaviour. The school is a calm and harmonious environment, where a smile is commonplace.
- Pupils are polite and courteous. They conduct themselves well when moving around school or when playing together at break or lunch time. Pupils play cooperatively together at social times and share in each other's games. Most pupils display self-regulation and get on with their work.
- Over time, the number of pupils who are persistently absent is reducing. Leaders and staff monitor the attendance of all groups of pupils, particularly those who are vulnerable, and they work together with parents to encourage pupils to attend school regularly. Despite this work, there continues to be a significant minority of pupils who are not attending as regularly as they should. Pupils' attendance is currently slightly below the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the previous inspection, pupils' progress and attainment by the end of key stage 2 have shown marked improvement in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, in 2018, pupils' progress at the end of key stage 2 was in the top 10% nationally. Pupils made excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Current pupils' assessment information indicates that pupils are achieving well and making good progress throughout key stage 2.
- Over time, the proportion of pupils by the end of key stage 2 who achieved at the highest standards has been a concern. However, current Year 6 pupils' assessment information and the work in pupils' books demonstrate that a higher proportion of pupils are working at a higher standard, particularly in reading and mathematics.

- Leaders are resolute in their work to sustain improvements throughout key stage 2. For example, same-day intervention and support for pupils provide bespoke teaching so that pupils do not fall behind and have every opportunity to grasp important skills.
- Leaders' accurate identification of the barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils is enabling teachers to plan and adapt learning activities to meet individual pupils' needs. Similarly, pupils with SEND are quickly identified when they may be struggling so that they too have every opportunity to succeed. As a result of this work, current disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND are achieving well over time and across a wide range of subjects and year groups.
- Over time, pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 1 have been variable. However, current pupils in Year 1 and 2 are achieving well because of highly effective teaching. Pupils are developing their English and mathematics skills strongly, preparing them well for the demands of key stage 2.
- While pupils benefit from a broad and varied curriculum, leaders acknowledge the work needed across the school to further strengthen the wider curriculum so that pupils have sufficient opportunities to achieve as well as they do in English and mathematics.

Early years provision

Good

- The leadership of early years is excellent. As a result, staff work highly effectively together to create an interesting and stimulating environment so that children learn and develop a wide range of skills and understanding.
- The early years leader has a strong understanding of the provision, complemented by a clear understanding of children's early development. Consequently, this enables staff to gain a precise understanding of each child's needs on entry.
- Most children enter the early years with knowledge, language and skills below those seen typically for their age and stage of development. Despite this, the early years leader, ably supported by all staff, has designed a curriculum that enables pupils to develop skills in language and communication swiftly.
- The curriculum provides extensive opportunities to develop children's early speech and language. For example, children listened enthusiastically to the story of 'The Gingerbread Man'. Opportunities were maximised to develop children's speech and phonic development. Children were challenged well to hold a pen accurately and write about an animal. Most did this with considerable success.
- Children respond well to staff and, in the main, demonstrate engagement in both indoor and outdoor activities. Activities are well planned to support children's physical and emotional development.
- Current children in both Nursery and Reception are making good progress from their starting points. For example, children in the Nursery are progressing from mark-making to accurately forming letters. Some are currently writing their own name with accuracy.
- Staff intervene effectively to support children's learning. As a result, children remain on task and demonstrate good attitudes and engagement. Children develop in confidence during their time in early years. This helps to prepare them for the demands of the Year 1 curriculum.

- Links have been effectively formed with parents. Parents are given an accurate view of their child's learning journey and take opportunities to provide feedback regarding their child's learning and progress.
- Clear routines and high expectations are the cornerstone of the work that takes place in the early years. Safeguarding is effective, and the welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	136943
Local authority	Hartlepool Borough
Inspection number	10087558

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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	145
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Dr Norman Shave
Headteacher	David Akers
Telephone number	01429 293777
Website	www.wardjackson.net/
Email address	admin@wardjacksonschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 September 2016

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller than average primary school situated in Hartlepool in the north east of England.
- The school is a Church of England voluntary aided school in the Diocese of Durham. The school's previous section 48 inspection was on 11 December 2017.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British. There are a small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of free school meals is significantly higher than the national average.
- The school serves a higher-than-average proportion of pupils who require additional support for SEND.
- The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school is higher than that found nationally.
- The school uses one alternative provider, Daisy Chain.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in all classes and year groups. Most of these observations were completed alongside the headteacher. During the observations, the inspector spoke to pupils about their learning and experiences of school and examined work in their books.
- The inspector observed pupils at break and lunchtime. The inspector also spoke to different groups of pupils about their learning. He also listened to a group of pupils read.
- The inspector met with senior and middle leaders, a group of governors, a representative from the local authority and some staff. A telephone conversation took place with another member of the local authority. A further telephone call took place with the education coordinator of the alternative provision used by the school.
- The inspector scrutinised and evaluated a wide sample of pupils' work from each year group to ascertain current pupils' learning and progress in a range of subjects.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of school documentation, including the school's self-evaluation document, development plan, current pupils' assessment information, attendance and behaviour records, documents associated with safeguarding and child protection and provision for SEND.
- The inspector examined the 13 responses to Parent View and the seven free-text responses. In addition, the inspector considered the 51 pupil responses and 19 staff responses to their online questionnaires.

Inspection team

Darren Stewart, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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