

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: George Washington Primary School

Well Bank Road, Washington, Tyne and Wear NE37 1NL

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Inspection dates:

18 and 19 March 2025

## Outcome

George Washington Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The executive headteacher of this school is Ailsa Taylor. This school is part of the Oak Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Ailsa Taylor, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Ralph Thoburn.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel safe and happy and enjoy coming to school. A pupil commented, 'School makes my life better, as people are kind and helpful.' Pupils are tolerant and supportive of each other. In lessons, pupils learn without disruption because they behave well and are considerate of others.

The school provides a welcoming, calm start to the school day for pupils. Staff quickly address any concerns or worries that pupils may have so pupils can start the day ready to learn. Pupils who need support to start the school day have access to the 'pods'. These provide a quiet space to help pupils get prepared before they go into class.

Pupils learn about diversity and differences. They have an excellent understanding of healthy relationships and how to keep themselves fit and healthy. Pupils talk confidently about what they have studied as the curriculum is organised successfully to give the pupils the knowledge they need.

The school has high expectations for pupils to work hard, and many achieve well. Pupils contribute to the life of the school. For example, pupils in Year 6 who take the role of pupil leaders organise sporting activities and read with children in the early years and key stage 1.

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

The school is well led and managed. Strong relationships create a positive atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils and staff get along well with each other. Staff communicate well with parents and carers. The school gives pupils the chance to achieve well and prepares them for the next steps in their lives.

Pupils receive a high-quality school experience. The curriculum design helps pupils remember crucial knowledge. Staff use recall and retrieval strategies so pupils remember essential information. Pupils use 'sorting trays' to show staff if they need more support. They then receive helpful feedback from staff. In the early years, children are independent and know the school's routines. They interact well with each other and take turns. They enjoy the exciting range of activities on offer to them. Children learn through play and highly effective adult-led groups. The learning environment is stimulating and supports early number and writing development.

The school has reviewed and reorganised the curriculum. Staff have broken down the important knowledge pupils need to know. This makes it easier for pupils to understand what they are learning. Staff teach a precisely sequenced curriculum. Pupils remember what they have studied and successfully apply knowledge and skills across a range of subjects.

The school's reading programme helps pupils in the Reception Year and key stage 1 to learn the sounds they need to know. Pupils accurately decode, blend and segment words. This supports them to become fluent readers. However, a small number of pupils do not have the required knowledge to take part in their phonics lessons. As a result, they do not develop the reading skills and knowledge they require to read with fluency.

The school supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. Pupils have individual support plans. Staff review the targets on these plans regularly. Curriculum adaptations help pupils with SEND study content matching their needs. Some pupils benefit from individualised support in the 'pods'. They also access the school's sensory room when they need to. Teachers and the special educational needs coordinator work together to provide high-quality curriculum and pastoral support for pupils. Pupils with SEND achieve well.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Staff support pupils who find behaviour more of a challenge effectively. The use of individual behaviour plans helps pupils to access the curriculum. Plans include strategies to help pupils manage their feelings and emotions.

To improve attendance, the school works in partnership with parents, an early help worker and a family support worker. Actions taken have had a positive effect. Attendance is improving throughout the school.

The school provides a wonderful range of enrichment opportunities for pupils. Pupils learn and develop new skills in the dedicated woodland area. This enables them to expand their

knowledge of nature and appreciate the outdoors. They learn how to ride bikes safely and stay safe in the community and online. Pupils sing at a local care home and support a homeless charity. The school offers pupils an extensive range of trips, including the Year 6 residential visit to France. The personal development offer in school is exemplary.

Governance of the school is strong. Members of the governing body are knowledgeable about the school's strengths and where challenges exist. Governors and trustees hold leaders to account. Staff enjoy working at the school. Senior leaders prioritise staff workload and well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Some pupils do not benefit from the phonics programme as they do not have the required reading knowledge to take part in phonics sessions. As a result, these pupils are missing out on valuable teaching time and are not developing the knowledge and skills they should. The school should review how it can support these pupils, so the phonics programme meets their needs.

## **Background**

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in February 2020.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	144220
<b>Local authority</b>	Sunderland
<b>Inspection number</b>	10370375
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	405
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Ralph Thoburn
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Dr Ailsa Taylor
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dr Ailsa Taylor
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.gwps.org.uk">www.gwps.org.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	26 and 27 February 2020 under section 8 of the education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation of the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with the executive headteacher, the head of school and other leaders, along with a range of staff. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, trustees, the CEO and the school's improvement partner.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to pupils about their learning, heard

pupils read and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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.
- The views of parents and carers were gathered through Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. The inspector also considered the views expressed through the online surveys for pupils and staff.
- The inspector scrutinised a variety of documents. These included safeguarding records, attendance information, the school improvement plan and the minutes of governing body and trust meetings.

### **Inspection team**

David Milligan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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