

# Inspection of Westlands Primary School

Ostend Place, Westlands, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire ST5 2QY

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Inspection dates: 17 and 18 October 2023

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|------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b> | <b>Good</b> |
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| The quality of education | <b>Good</b> |
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|                         |             |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Behaviour and attitudes | <b>Good</b> |
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|                      |             |
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| Personal development | <b>Good</b> |
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|                           |             |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Leadership and management | <b>Good</b> |
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|                       |             |
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| Early years provision | <b>Good</b> |
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|---------------------------|------|
| Previous inspection grade | Good |
|---------------------------|------|

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils at Westlands are proud of their school. They know and take seriously the school's values. Pupils live up to these values by being 'Thinkers'. As part of this, pupils strive to be good team players, behave respectfully and work hard. One pupil commented, 'Thinkers are the core values of our school. It's just what we are.'

Pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well in most subjects. Pupils know that they are expected to work hard and to succeed. They take pride in their learning. This is reflected in the work that pupils produce and how keen they are to talk about what they have learned.

Pupils are polite, well mannered and thoughtful towards each other and staff. There is a respectful and harmonious culture, and pupils feel safe and valued. They know that staff are there to help them if they have any worries or concerns.

Pupils gain many new skills through the school's well-organised programme of wider activities. For instance, they complete a residential trip to an outdoor activity centre. They also participate in after-school clubs, such as coding, cheerleading, chess and sports, regularly.

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

The school has a well-designed curriculum in place for pupils, including for children in the early years, in most subjects. Over the last year, leaders updated some subjects in the curriculum. As part of this work, the school has identified and ordered the information that it expects pupils to learn in most subjects. However, in a few subjects, the important knowledge pupils are expected to learn is not as clear. This means learning does not always build on prior knowledge. For this reason, and due to the newness of other subject curriculums, pupils have some gaps in their knowledge.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They explain things clearly. In addition, teachers make regular checks on how pupils are doing in lessons. They quickly spot pupils who are stuck and give them extra help when needed.

Reading is a priority. Leaders have introduced several strategies to develop a love of reading. This includes, for example, the opportunity for pupils to earn tokens for reading, which they can spend in the school's book vending machine. Consequently, many pupils are keen to read, including at home. The phonics programme lays strong foundations for reading in later year groups. Leaders have ensured that staff know how to teach phonics well. Staff ensure that pupils have plenty of opportunities to practise reading books that are well matched to their abilities. This helps them to build fluency and confidence. Furthermore, staff quickly identify and help pupils who need extra support. However, leaders have not ensured that all staff who work with these pupils ensure that they use their phonic skills independently

when reading books. This means that these pupils do not read as fluently or confidently as they could.

Children in Reception settle well into school. This is because there are clearly established routines and staff work hard to get to know them. Children and staff cooperate well together. This positive environment ensures that children learn.

The school identifies pupils with SEND promptly. Pupils with SEND often receive dedicated support. Teachers regularly adapt learning so that pupils with SEND can achieve well. On occasion, however, some pupils with SEND do not receive the right sort of support to help them learn well. Teachers do not always make the right adaptations for these pupils. In addition, the special educational needs coordinator does not have sufficient time to make sure that pupils with SEND receive the right support out of lessons.

Pupils work well together. They behave well in lessons. The atmosphere in classrooms is calm and orderly. Little learning time is lost. Pupils' behaviour is similarly good on the playground. They enjoy earning points for behaviour in order to earn additional playtime. Attendance has greatly improved over the last year. This is because the school has been tenacious in monitoring attendance and working with families who need support.

There is a strong programme for personal, social and health education. Pupils learn about differences between people, including those of different faiths. They learn about healthy relationships and living a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are encouraged to be 'mindful', and those who need it receive extra support for their mental well-being. Older pupils enjoy providing support across the school, such as being lunchtime, computer or assembly monitors. The school council contributes to school life. It played an important role in developing the school's values.

Governors provide a good balance of challenge and support. Governors often visit school or look at questionnaires sent to parents and staff. This helps them to carry out their work effectively. They have also identified appropriate next steps for the school.

## **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 all staff who work with pupils who find reading difficult know how best to support these pupils. This means that these pupils are not catching up as quickly as they could. The school should ensure that all staff

receive training to support pupils when reading, especially for those who need to catch up.

- In a few subjects, the school has not yet identified the key knowledge it expects pupils to learn. This means that pupils do not learn the curriculum in these subjects as well as they could. The school should ensure that all subject curriculums outline the essential learning clearly and that pupils learn this knowledge.
- Support for some pupils with SEND is not closely matched to their needs. As a result, these pupils do not make as much progress as they could. The school should ensure that support is closely matched to pupils' needs to help them to learn more.

## 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>             | 124119  |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Staffordshire   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10298617  |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary   |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Maintained  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 5 to 11   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed   |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 198   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body  |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Vicky Recine  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Jonathan Taylor   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.westlands.staffs.sch.uk">http://www.westlands.staffs.sch.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 4 July 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005                              |

## Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provider.

## Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the lead inspector held meetings with the headteacher. He also met three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- 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.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history and physical education. They met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils, and viewed examples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work from science and geography. An inspector spoke with the subject leaders in religious education, design and technology and geography.
- An inspector observed children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 read to a trusted adult.
- The inspectors spoke with members of staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- The inspectors considered the responses, including the free-text comments, to Ofsted Parent View. They also considered the responses to the staff and pupil surveys. An inspectors spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation, school improvement priorities, school policies, curriculum documents, SEND records, behaviour records, attendance records and minutes of meetings held by the governing body and trust board.

### **Inspection team**

Barry Yardsley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Su Plant

Ofsted Inspector

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