

Westfield Community School

Montrose Avenue, Pemberton, Wigan, Lancashire, WN5 9XN

Inspection dates 9–10 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils' achievement is outstanding. From very low starting points on entry to school they make excellent progress, often exceeding national progress expectations for primary school pupils. By the end of Year 6, most pupils reach, and some exceed, the expected levels of attainment for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers' high expectations bring out the very best in pupils. Learning activities are extremely well matched to pupils' individual needs and interests. This combines with a rich and vibrant curriculum to make learning relevant and fun.
- Pupils with special educational needs, including those in the extra places funded by the local authority, are extremely well provided for, take part fully in all aspects of school life and are enabled to achieve well.
- Children quickly become enthusiastic learners in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Excellent teaching, high-quality extended care and a range of additional services on site all contribute significantly to their outstanding achievement.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Because they feel safe, happy and secure they are able to enjoy successful learning. They are proud of their school and contribute in many ways to making it a happy place for everyone, including acting as influential school councillors.
- The headteacher's excellent and highly strategic leadership is supported by talented senior staff and by effective middle leaders. Knowledgeable governors and a united staff team share a firm resolve to achieve the very best possible outcomes for every pupil.
- The pursuit of ongoing improvement is relentless and the school has continued to improve since its last inspection. Standards in reading, in particular, have risen significantly in recent times and this has increased pupils' capacity to learn and progress across all the subjects. Parents are very pleased with their children's achievement in school.
- Teachers' excellent marking and advice in English and mathematics help pupils to keep on improving their work. The school has identified that this guidance is sometimes not quite as effective in the other subjects, however, and work is under way to address some minor inconsistencies.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons, including joint observations with the headteacher and members of the school’s senior leadership team. They also carried out ‘learning walks’ which involved spending short periods of time in a number of lessons. They listened to pupils read in Years 1, 2 and 6 and held discussions with pupils about the books they have enjoyed and those they are currently reading.
- Meetings were held with four members of the governing body, with senior staff and subject leaders, with a group of pupils and with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed 15 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). They took into account the outcomes of a recent survey of parents’ views conducted by the school. One inspector also met with a group of parents to hear their views about the school.
- Inspectors took into account the views that staff expressed in the questionnaires they completed.
- They observed the school’s work. They inspected the written work in pupils’ books and also looked at a wide range of documentation, including safeguarding documents, the school development plan, records of pupils’ current attainment and progress, and documents relating to pupils’ behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Diane Auton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Ashley

Additional Inspector

Nigel Cromey-Hawke

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger in size than most other primary schools.
- Most pupils are White British, with English as their home language. A very small minority of pupils are from a range of other backgrounds and heritages, although currently no pupils are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school is funded by its local authority to provide nine additional places for pupils with autism or with speech and language difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is well above average. (This additional government funding is provided for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- Around one third of the children who attend the school's Nursery classes transfer to Reception classes at other schools at the end of the year.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has a Children's Centre on site. The centre is managed by the headteacher. The pre-school operates as an integrated service with a voluntary provider. The Children's Centre and its wraparound provision were not part of this inspection. The most recent inspection reports for both the centre and the childcare provision are available on the Ofsted website.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the excellent marking and guidance that teachers provide for pupils in English and mathematics are also provided consistently in other subjects, to enable pupils to identify for themselves what the next steps in their learning should be in all of the areas of study.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Pupils' achievement has risen further since the last inspection. This is because the school has sustained the excellent rates of progress that were identified then and also because standards of attainment have continued to rise.
- Most children start in the Nursery classes with exceptionally low skills' levels, especially in language and communication. They make rapid progress, however, so that by the end of the Reception year most are operating at levels that are closer to the usual expectations for their age. They have also gained the extremely positive attitudes to learning that pupils demonstrate all through the school.
- Pupils continue to make excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics as they move up through Key Stages 1 and 2. Their rate of progress often exceeds that of most pupils across the country. As a result, most pupils reach the expected standards for their age in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2 and some do even better than this.
- In the current Year 6 the proportion of pupils working at Level 5, the level above the minimum expectations for their age, is greater than in previous years and is now similar to the national average. In mathematics, an above average proportion of pupils in this year group are on track to achieve a Level 6, the level 14 year-olds are expected nationally to achieve.
- In 2012 the proportion of pupils in Year 1 who met the required standard in the new national check on phonic skills, which focuses on their ability to identify letters and the sounds they make, was below average. Effective action by the school has enabled the pupils who did not meet the standard in Year 1 to catch up in Year 2. Overall attainment in reading in Key Stage 1 has risen and is now in line with the national average.
- Across the school pupils' reading skills are developing very well. Systematic teaching of letters and sounds is giving pupils the tools they need to become proficient readers. From a young age, pupils read books appropriate for their age, clearly and with interest and enjoyment. Attainment in reading is now a little above average by the time pupils leave the school in Year 6.
- The attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is the same as that of other pupils in school, in English and in mathematics. These pupils and those who are looked after by the local authority all achieve well in relation to their individual starting points. This is the result of the school's careful targeting of pupil premium funding and the positive impact of measures to ensure equal opportunities for all pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those in the extra places that are funded by the local authority, make excellent progress because of the first-rate support and guidance the school provides for them.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The quality of teaching is outstanding overall and never less than good.
- Typical features of the excellent teaching in the school are:
 - extremely well planned lessons where learning moves along briskly and pupils' interest is sustained throughout
 - purposeful learning, with pupils given a clear understanding of what they are expected to do, of how the lesson links up to what they have already learned, and of what they will be doing next
 - activities with a high level of challenge, indicating teachers' rigorous expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - effective teamwork between teachers and highly skilled teaching assistants, ensuring that learners of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are given the support they need to achieve well in the lesson.

- Regular assessment and checks on pupils' progress help to ensure that pupils with special educational needs, and any pupil who may be underachieving, are quickly identified and given the help and support they need. The school works closely with a range of other professionals to ensure that pupils in the extra places funded by the local authority are very well supported and cared for.
- The school has developed an impressive range of strategies to provide the different levels of support and challenge that individuals, or groups of pupils, require. In Year 6, for example, pupils are taught in smaller groups of similar ability. This well organised teaching strategy is one of many effective approaches that are being developed across the school. In Year 6, it is contributing significantly to ongoing improvements in all pupils' achievement and, in particular, to this year's increase in the number of pupils who are working confidently at the higher levels.
- Outstanding teaching, excellent teamwork by staff and a lively curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage are preparing children extremely well for the next stage in their education. Plentiful opportunities for investigative learning and problem-solving, both in the classroom and out of doors, are planned exceptionally well and make learning great fun.
- Across the school, teachers use information and communication technology to excellent effect in lessons to support successful learning. For example, in an outstanding mathematics lesson in Year 5, pupils made rapid and excellent progress in solving problems; an electronic system allowed them to read and select correct solutions and also gave their teacher a clear and instant overview of how well they were doing. Because the system was used skilfully every pupil received a measure of challenge or support that was tailored closely to their individual needs and this contributed very well to everyone's excellent achievement in the lesson.
- Marking is used extremely well to guide pupils in improving their work, especially in English and mathematics. The school has recently identified some minor inconsistencies in the guidance provided for pupils in other subjects. Work is under way to ensure that pupils are helped to identify for themselves the next steps they need to take to improve in all of the subjects.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are exemplary. They feel very secure in school and they are confident that adults are always on hand to help if they have a problem.
- Parents' comments and questionnaire responses show that they highly value the level of care and safety the school provides for their children.
- Pupils' understanding of issues around different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying, is impressive. They say bullying in school is rare and that staff always deal with it quickly.
- Pupils' excellent conduct in lessons is a key factor in their successful learning. They concentrate and apply themselves extremely well, readily share ideas with each other, use resources independently and require only minimal direction in organising themselves in the classroom.
- Pupils who are potentially vulnerable and those with additional learning, health, social or emotional needs are supported extremely well. The school's proactive pastoral care team keeps a sharp focus on removing barriers to learning and this is helping pupils to do increasingly well in school. Support programmes are carefully matched to the needs of individual pupils who require extra help and are rigorously evaluated to ensure that they are effective.
- The school works in effective partnerships with a wide range of agencies that support pupils' well-being. Regular training on child protection and related issues is helping to keep staff skills and knowledge of best practice up to date.
- The school provides opportunities for pupils in the extra places funded by the local authority to undergo a period of assessment, so that their needs can be determined accurately and so that appropriate plans can be made for the next steps in their education.
- Pupils' attendance is in line with the national average and the school works effectively to support families at risk of poor attendance.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher, the senior team and the business management team are effective leaders who manage a complex organisation with great skill. As a result, the school has continued to build on the outstanding overall effectiveness that was identified at its last inspection. Leaders drive improvements forward energetically, and any identified weaknesses are addressed by prompt and decisive action. This was seen, for example, in last year's review of the teaching of reading, which led to an overhaul of teaching methods across the school, which, in turn, has resulted in a significant rise in pupils' achievement in reading.
- Middle leaders and subject leaders all make a strong contribution, including assisting the senior team in making regular checks on the quality of teaching and its impact on the progress that pupils make.
- Staff are clearly held to account through well established performance management systems but are also very well supported by an extensive programme of professional training and development.
- Systematic progress reviews every term give the school a clear and detailed picture of how well every pupil is doing and help to identify anyone who may need extra support.
- Leaders' strategic planning is outstanding. The school development plan sets out improvement aims and priorities, and identifies well chosen actions to enable the school to continue improving. Plans are underpinned by detailed, rigorous and accurate self-evaluation.
- The school's exceptionally rich curriculum helps to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness extremely well. Subjects are brought together into topics that are interesting and relevant for pupils. Since the time of the last inspection, the school has developed an adventure-based learning programme, with a strong accent on the use of the outdoor environment. The programme operates across the age-range in school and contributes strongly to pupils' motivation to learn. The curriculum is further enriched by specialist visitors and by visits to places of interest, including residential trips. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to develop sporting, artistic and musical skills and the many well attended after-school clubs provide further enhancement.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for this outstanding school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have an accurate overview of pupils' achievement because they take regular opportunities through the year to examine data on how well pupils are doing. The governing body receives regular reports on the quality of teaching and its impact on progress. Governors hold the school to account assiduously and ask searching questions from a well informed standpoint. They manage staff performance very effectively. A full understanding of the link between staff performance and salary progression informs all of their decisions about staff pay. The governing body ensures that the pupil premium funding is wisely spent, for example to provide additional individual or small group support. As a result, any barriers to learning are addressed successfully and pupils achieve increasingly well. Governors carry out their statutory duties effectively, ensuring that safeguarding procedures are managed well and reviewed regularly. They ensure that equal opportunities are promoted vigorously and that discrimination is not tolerated in the school.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	134742
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	411926

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	442
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	M Coghlin
Headteacher	T Sherriff
Date of previous school inspection	24 May 2010
Telephone number	01942 776007
Fax number	01942 776008
Email address	headteacher@admin.westfield.wigan.sch.uk

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