

Westgate Academy

Westgate, Lincoln, LN1 3BQ

Inspection dates 24–25 April 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Requires improvement 3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement 3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement 3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement 3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement 3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' progress is not consistently as strong as it should be, given their starting points. Achievement in mathematics lags a little behind the other subjects.
- Teaching requires improvement. Teachers do not always check pupils' progress closely enough. As a result, some pupils make too little progress and do not know how to improve their work.
- Teachers do not always get the best out of pupils because work set is not hard enough, not only for those who find learning easy, but also those who are of average ability.
- Teaching in mathematics focuses too heavily on repeating what pupils can already do rather than on using and applying their skills. Teachers do not ensure that pupils consistently use correct mathematical vocabulary in their discussions.
- The comments teachers make on pupils' work are not always helping them to improve.
- Senior leaders and the governing body have not been able to secure enough gains in the quality of teaching for pupils' achievement to be good.
- Checks made by leaders at all levels and by governors do not focus sharply enough on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and achievement and whether the school's plans succeed in securing the desired results.
- Some parents, staff and pupils remain justifiably concerned about some pupils' behaviour in school.

The school has the following strengths

- There are good aspects to leaders' work to improve teaching that are making a positive impact.
- Pupils' achievement in reading has significantly improved and is now a success story. Standards in reading are above average.
- The large majority of pupils behave sensibly and feel safe at school.
- A good range of enrichment activities add to pupils' enjoyment and broaden their learning experiences well.
- Most parents are well satisfied with the school's work and say their child is happy at the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 27 lessons or parts of lessons including five observed jointly with senior leaders. An inspector and the headteacher jointly reviewed a sample of pupils' written work.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, with senior and middle leaders and the Chair of the Governing Body and the vice-chair.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including the school's own data concerning pupils' current and recent progress, planning and monitoring documentation, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors took into account 56 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire together with the school's own survey of parental opinions during the previous year. Additionally, two inspectors talked informally to parents and carers as they brought their children to school on the second day of the inspection.
- Inspectors considered 33 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Krishan Sharma, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Susan Tabberer

Additional Inspector

Heather Osgood

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British. A very small minority come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds and a few of them speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium is below average. This is extra funding provided by the government to support certain groups of pupils. In this school, it applies to pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement and progress at the end of Year 6.
- There is a provision for breakfast and after-school clubs on the school site. These are not managed by the governing body and were not subject to this inspection.
- The Westgate Academy converted to become an academy school on 1 September 2011. It is not part of a group. When its predecessor school, Westgate Junior School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement by making sure that teachers:
 - check pupils' progress more closely in order to move those who are ready quickly on to the next steps in their learning
 - give pupils the right level of work to do
 - ensure that pupils understand how to improve their work, for instance through using the guidance given to them through marking.
 - Improve pupils' achievement in mathematics by:
 - reducing the amount of repetition, particularly in pupils' work with calculations
 - enabling pupils to apply and practice their mathematical knowledge more frequently
 - ensuring that pupils consistently use and understand mathematical vocabulary when discussing their work in mathematics.
 - Build on the recent success in improving pupils' behaviour by developing the skills of a small minority who still find it difficult to manage their own behaviour.
 - Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - senior and other leaders, and governors check more rigorously how effective the school's plans and actions are in securing the intended improvements
 - monitoring of teaching focuses sharply on the progress different groups of pupils make in lessons and in their written work.
 - governors support and challenge leaders to move the school rapidly to become a good school.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- From the school's baseline of pupils' broadly average attainment on entry into Year 3, the end of Year 6 results indicate that pupils' progress has not been enough for achievement to be good by the end of Year 6. Despite the currently improving progress, the picture of learning over time is still not consistently strong.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average in reading but remain broadly average in writing and mathematics. This shows that achievement requires improvement. Some pupils of average ability and some of the most able do not make enough progress.
- In 2013 the Year 6 results were lowest in mathematics. The current Year 6 pupils are on track to reach standards that are broadly similar to those achieved last year in reading and writing, but, although still requiring improvement, they are on target to do better in mathematics overall.
- In mathematics, pupils' progress is improving but not in all aspects. Pupils enjoy handling numbers and their calculations are mostly accurate. However, often some pupils continue to practise calculations unnecessarily, rather than using them in solving mathematical problems. Although pupils are keen to talk about their work, their use of mathematical language is not always accurate.
- In the 2013 Year 6 national tests, the attainment of pupils supported by the pupil premium was a term and half behind their peers in reading, writing and mathematics. Their progress was stronger than others in writing, but not as strong as them in reading and mathematics. The gap is narrowing. The school's analysis shows that currently, most pupils eligible for pupil premium are making similar progress to others.
- Pupils' progress in writing is improving. Pupils understand that their choice of vocabulary can improve the quality of their writing. They can sustain and develop their ideas in interesting ways, using increasingly complex sentences.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to their peers. The additional support for them is accurately matched to their specific needs and ensures equality of opportunity for them.
- The small proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress. The extra support helps them to rapidly acquire good competence in English.
- Progress in reading is strong and pupils are keen to read. The school routinely identifies pupils whose phonics skills (linking letters and the sounds they make) are insecure. Systematic teaching of reading leads to above average standards by the time pupils leave school.
- Pupils' achievement in sports is improving as a result of the extra coaching recently provided. This has given them increased understanding of the link between physical health and exercise, and increased enjoyment and skill in competitive sports.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teachers routinely monitor pupils' progress during lessons, but their monitoring is not always used well to move pupils on to the next stage of learning, even when they are ready or to help

pupils understand how to improve their work. Marking of pupils' written work is mostly clear and guides pupils to make improvements, but teachers do not always check whether their guidance is followed up.

- Not all teachers demand enough of pupils of average ability and some of the most able. As a result, they do not always make the strongest possible progress. This also means that their slower rate of progress contributes to the overall less than good achievement in the school.
- The teaching of mathematics is improving, but there is too much unnecessary repetition of basic skills rather than opportunities to use and apply them. Although technical mathematical vocabulary is used, it is not always taught well, so that not all pupils can use it accurately.
- Typically, teachers expect pupils to work hard and concentrate on their work in lessons, which they achieve in most lessons. They provide numerous opportunities for pupils to work with others which help them to develop their social and communication skills.
- The extra help teaching assistants provide adds considerably to pupils' learning. Pupils who find learning difficult benefit from the individual support they receive.
- The teaching of disabled pupils, and those who have special education needs, and those known to be eligible for pupil premium is specifically aimed at improving their achievement and personal development. The additional support they receive is working well and as a result, most of them do as well as others in the school.
- Effective teaching of reading makes a strong contribution to the school's success in raising reading standards.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. During the inspection, most pupils behaved well in lessons and around the school. However, the discussion with pupils, and the views expressed by some parents and staff indicate that typically, behaviour is not as good.
- The management of behaviour has improved recently because there are clear guidelines for adults to apply and pupils to follow. Pupils confirmed during their discussions that behaviour has improved. Senior leaders are aware that there is still more work to do. A very small minority of pupils find managing their own behaviour difficult, particularly when they are not under supervision.
- Most pupils are keen to learn. They relate well to each other. Most of them display positive attitudes to learning. A few engage less well with their learning, particularly when teaching fails to maintain their interest, but it rarely results in disruption for others.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. Most parents are well satisfied with the care their children receive at school. Although the online Parent View responses indicated some concerns with bullying at school; this was not confirmed by parents that spoke with inspectors during the inspection, nor by records checked. Pupils say bullying is rare and when it occurs, it is promptly dealt with by adults. They understand the different forms bullying may take, such as name calling, cyber bullying or that which is prejudice based.
- Senior leaders' efforts in promoting regular attendance and reducing the levels of exclusions have paid off. Attendance has recently improved to above average and exclusions, which had

been above average, are now very few.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not been able to establish a consistently good quality of teaching that results in pupils' good achievement.
- The school's priorities for improvement are carefully chosen and appropriate, but they are not always clearly expressed. The audit taken of the previous year's plans was thorough, but it mainly described what the school had done and said less about the impact of the actions, especially on pupils' achievement.
- Checks made on teaching by senior and other leaders are extensive. However, they are not focused enough on the impact of teaching on the progress different groups make. This means the school has an incomplete view of the quality of its teaching.
- Subject leaders enthusiastically lead developments in their areas of responsibility and are good at promoting ideas to improve classroom practice. Their monitoring of developments is not as rigorous as it needs to be, which means their contribution is not as strong as they would like it to be.
- Checks on, and reviews of, pupils' progress data are now a regular feature. These help senior leaders, staff and governors to know how different groups are performing and identify pupils who would benefit from intervention. Extra help is provided to vulnerable groups to ensure that they enjoy equal opportunities to succeed. Steps like these have resulted in some notable success, particularly in raising standards in reading, reflecting the school's growing capacity to improve.
- Arrangements for teachers' performance are designed to establish clear links between decisions on their pay and their performance in the classroom. Staff training takes into account targets set for individual teachers.
- Pupil premium funding is used to provide one-to-one and small-group activities for eligible pupils to boost their progress in basic skills and support their personal development. This support continues to make a considerable difference as the gap in theirs and other pupils' attainment is increasingly narrowing.
- The use of primary sports funding has increased pupils' participation in a wider range of physical activities in a school which already enjoys success in competitive sporting activities. External coaches are used well to refine pupils' physical dexterity and in improving the teaching of physical education.
- The range of taught subjects and activities are being adjusted to align them with the new requirements. The programme is suitably designed to improve pupils' basic skills and their use across other subjects. Day-to-day learning, together with a good range of enrichment activities, including an extensive provision for music, contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Most parents are well satisfied with what the school provides for their children. The school has extended its links with parents by explaining to them the details of the school's learning programme.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body keeps itself adequately informed about pupils' performance data and how it compares with other schools nationally. It is aware of the strengths in teaching, but is less clear about the detail of its weaknesses and has not held the school to account rigorously enough, in the past, on this issue. However, governors support the idea of linking decisions on teachers' pay to their performance in the classroom. They are sufficiently skilled to hold senior leaders to account for the school's performance and are willing to fine-tune their skills further to bring rigour to their monitoring of the school's work. The governing body takes a keen interest in the use of pupil premium and primary schools sport funds and the difference it makes to pupils' learning and achievement. Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet current requirements.

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	137451
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	443985

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	427
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bob Swainson
Headteacher	Richard Stock
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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