

# The Westgate School

Cheriton Road, Winchester, Hampshire SO22 5AZ

## Inspection dates

13–14 December 2016

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	<b>Good</b>

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership by creating a strong culture for learning and of high expectations.
- Governors have enabled the school to flourish by supporting the headteacher in a time of significant change. The school has successfully moved from being a secondary school to an all-through school with primary provision.
- Governors have adeptly led the development of the new building and new information technology infrastructure of the primary provision.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have improved academic standards so that pupils make progress that is above the national average for all groups in key stage 4.
- Pupils are self-assured learners who are prepared well for the next stage of their education.
- Teachers throughout the school have good subject knowledge, resulting in well-planned lessons, especially in key stages 3 and 4. Teaching in English, modern foreign languages, science and art is particularly strong.
- Leaders have recognised weaknesses in the teaching of phonics in key stage 1 and have taken effective action so that the current progress of pupils is looking stronger than was the case last year.
- The early years foundation stage is extremely well led and managed. Children make rapid progress from their different starting points.
- The early years leader creates a stimulating and varied environment that encourages children to play, explore and learn well.
- Inconsistencies in planning for the range of ability in key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics result in pupils not sustaining the progress made from their strong starting points in the early years.
- Pupils are articulate and speak highly of their school, describing it as a 'big family'. Due to well-established routines the pupils and children move safely and calmly around the school.
- Attendance is above the national average and improving for disadvantaged groups as a result of the actions of leaders.
- Pupils have a mantra of 'Ban the banter' that leads to a safe, caring and respectful environment for pupils where bullying is rare.
- Pupils have the opportunity to experience a broad curriculum with a wide range of extra-curricular activities that are well attended.
- Some groups of pupils do not make the same amount of progress in mathematics as in other subjects.

## Full report

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

- Ensure that teaching in key stage 1 builds effectively on the strong outcomes at the end of the early years, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics, by:
  - providing appropriate support for pupils of low ability, including the disadvantaged, to enable them to catch up quickly with their peers
  - ensuring that there is sufficient challenge for the most able, including the most able disadvantaged, especially in mathematics.
- Ensure that teaching is consistently good or better across the school in mathematics so that all groups of pupils make good progress by:
  - teachers checking pupils' learning and progress more routinely in lessons and responding accordingly
  - all teachers implementing effectively the school's agreed policy on providing feedback to pupils.
- Ensure that leaders, managers and governors monitor closely the progress made by different groups of pupils in key stage 1 and hold staff rigorously to account for how well pupils achieve.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The headteacher provides a clear vision for the school and sets high expectations of the staff and pupils in a supportive environment. One parent wrote that 'The headteacher's philosophy pervades every aspect of school life; happy children are happy to learn.' This is seen throughout the school and is a testament to the hard work of all staff.
- Leaders continue to raise standards in key stages 3 and 4 through a comprehensive programme of continuous training for teachers at all levels. Leaders have improved the transition process because they have established primary provision in the school. Alongside this, leaders have provided opportunities for teachers to receive effective training across both phases.
- Appointing a previous primary headteacher to lead the primary phase is bringing relevant expertise to the leadership team and the skills and knowledge needed as the primary element of the school grows over time.
- Middle leaders are grouped in threes, supported by a senior leader to provide challenge and support across subject areas. Middle leaders see this approach as a positive development in providing opportunities to share good practice. Senior leaders consistently manage and challenge leaders so that there is a strong focus on the quality of classroom teaching. Middle leaders are clear on the priorities, identifying literacy across the curriculum and a focus on improving results for the disadvantaged pupils as most important.
- Middle leaders undertake observations of lessons and scrutinise work with each other across subjects. This ensures that their judgements are checked with the support of senior leaders. As a result, their work is raising the bar through greater challenge within a supportive framework.
- Staff value the opportunities for training and are fully behind the school leaders. One group of staff said, 'It is a pleasure to work here.' This exemplifies the supportive culture that leaders create.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has a clear approach for ensuring that staff know the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The SENCo identifies their needs precisely and gives clear guidance to staff on the support that pupils require. Specialist support is used wisely to assess need and target specific intervention.
- Teachers and other adults have created a climate where pupils and children show respect and courtesy to each other and adults from early years to key stage 4.
- The curriculum is both broad and balanced in providing pupils with a wide range of choices at GCSE. Pupils choose their options in Year 8 and further refine these choices in Year 9. There is one common pathway for all pupils that promotes equality of opportunity effectively.
- The formal curriculum is supported well by a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities for pupils. In key stage 1, pupils take additional activities, for example:

gymnastics, Mandarin, street dance and birdhouse design. In key stages 3 and 4 there is a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities, especially in sport and music. Academic subjects run clubs and catch-up sessions in subjects such as mathematics and science.

- Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain due to lessons in religious education and citizenship and through assemblies. Students have a secure understanding of their rights and responsibilities and what it means to be a good citizen and to live in a democratic society. Students who have moved to Britain are encouraged to describe what it feels like to move to a new country. Such activities help pupils to develop empathy towards people from other countries, faiths and beliefs.
- Leaders promote equality and diversity very well so that bullying is rare and homophobic bullying does not occur. A lunchtime club is provided for those who are gay, which exemplifies the open culture in the school.
- Pupils are self-assured learners who are articulate and well prepared for the next stage of their education. They have the opportunity to explore the world of work through activity days. Pupils receive independent careers advice.
- Leaders and managers ensure that the pupil premium is used effectively to improve the progress pupils make in English. However, Year 7 catch-up funding is having a greater impact in English than in mathematics in helping pupils to reach age-related expectations. Leaders are aware of this and have already put strategies in place to bring about further improvements.
- Monitoring by leaders is not rigorous enough in phonics, reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 1.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors rose to the challenge of an increase in the numbers of pupils in the area by creating an all-through school to meet the increase in the demand for school places. Governors recognised that they had a key role to play in the leadership and management of the new building and infrastructure and ensured that the headteacher was able to remain focused on raising standards in key stages 3 and 4. This was achieved.
- Governors provide challenge to the leadership team and set the headteacher challenging objectives linked to raising standards of achievement further. They oversee the school's arrangements for managing teachers' performance effectively.
- Governors take a strategic view and bring a wealth of experience to the school. They are fully aware of the ongoing challenge as the primary provision grows and the need to develop their capacity to oversee this new phase.
- Governors monitor closely the use and impact of the pupil premium, Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up, physical education and sports premium grants. They apply strong challenge to the school over the performance of disadvantaged pupils.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All necessary checks are undertaken in the recruitment of staff and new staff are provided with safeguarding training. Staff receive regular updates throughout the year and always in September at the start of term. All staff have read the most up-to-date guidance on 'Keeping children safe in

education'. There are clear systems that staff follow in reporting any concerns. The culture of safeguarding is strong in the school.

- Governors regularly check on safeguarding and it is an agenda item on all governing body meetings. The school site is very open but the access to the primary provision is highly secure.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- The planning for teaching, learning and assessment is particularly strong in key stages 3 and 4. The teachers throughout the school have good subject knowledge, resulting in well-planned lessons that enable pupils to progress well. Teachers offer a range of approaches to develop pupils' thinking. Focused questioning is helping to deepen knowledge and challenge for the most able pupils.
- Teaching in English, modern foreign languages, science and art is a strength in key stages 3 and 4. Teaching assistants are used effectively, for example in science to ensure that pupils remain engaged in their learning. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and are making rapid progress.
- Throughout all year groups, pupils' speaking skills are very strong. Pupils are articulate and can confidently discuss complex ideas both in small groups and with the whole class. In addition, they listen well to each other's view.
- When teachers follow the school's marking and assessment policy in providing detailed and accurate feedback, pupils know how well they are achieving and how to improve. Feedback was seen as particularly effective in a GCSE art lesson where the quality of the pupils' artwork had improved significantly from their starting point. Where feedback is less effective, pupils do not make rapid progress. This was evident in some of the mathematics lessons for pupils of lower ability.
- In key stage 1, pupils' comprehension skills are strong and pupils are able to infer and retrieve information from texts. The most able pupils are fast and fluent in their reading. Teachers are beginning to address weaknesses in phonics that prevented lower-ability pupils from being confident in understanding how to interpret unfamiliar words.
- Teaching in key stage 1 does not include enough support to help pupils of lower ability to develop their writing skills well enough. This leads to this group of pupils making less than the expected progress for their age.
- Pupils have mastery in mathematics and the majority are working at age-related expectations. However, teachers have not always corrected basic errors in mathematics in key stage 1 so that pupils learn from their mistakes. In many lessons teachers are not sufficiently challenging the most able pupils with work in mathematics that will deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, with the vast majority believing that their child is taught well and makes good progress. A number of parents commented on the frequency of homework as being variable across subjects.

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. The relationships between staff and pupils are extremely positive and pupils feel very well supported by the pastoral team in the school.
- The range of extra-curricular opportunities provided for pupils enables them to develop skills beyond the academic curriculum. Pupils have opportunities to take on extra responsibility, for example through the prefect system, mentoring and peer reading. Careers education and guidance prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education and give them an understanding of the world of work.
- The vast majority of parents state that their child is happy and safe at the school. One parent wrote, 'She skips in happily each morning and is welcomed by warm and caring staff who clearly know her so well.' This high level of pastoral care is seen across the whole school. Staff go the extra mile to ensure that all pupils are able to take part in all activities. This was seen in the key stage 1 Christmas Nativity where all pupils took part regardless of their special educational needs and/or disability.
- Pupils are fully aware of how to keep themselves safe; they are taught about e-safety and the dangers of social media. They know whom to speak to if they have a concern over safeguarding.
- Bullying is rare and on the few occasions when it does occur it is dealt with swiftly and effectively. This is supported by Parent View comments, many of which say that parents have never experienced any bullying of their child. As one parent wrote, 'The Westgate School creates a fantastic learning environment and nurtures children to be the best they can be.' This sums up the culture of the school.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils move calmly and safely around both parts of the site, showing respect towards each other and adults. Inspectors found the pupils pleasant and polite at all times. Parents report that children are well behaved and this was confirmed in the observations made both in and out of class by the inspectors.
- Pupils are attentive in lessons and listen respectfully to each other. Those who have more difficulty concentrating are supported well by teaching assistants.
- Senior leaders' actions have improved attendance so that overall it is now above the national average and improving for vulnerable groups who historically have had lower attendance. Pupils are punctual to school and lessons. On occasions, when pupils have missed lessons due to absence, the systems are not always followed through to ensure that pupils catch up with their learning.
- Leaders enable those pupils who have been following an alternative programme of education at The Bridge Education Centre to be successfully reintegrated back into the school.

## Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make good progress from their above-average starting points. In some subjects, particularly at key stage 4, outcomes are excellent. Where weaknesses exist, leaders take swift action to bring about improvements.
- The progress of the disadvantaged and the disadvantaged most able pupils is improving. It is closer to that of other pupils nationally where historically it had been low, especially in mathematics for the most able disadvantaged.
- Pupils read fluently and have good comprehension skills appropriate for their age, especially the most able in key stages 3 and 4. The peer reading scheme between Year 9 and Year 7 is helping to develop the reading of the lower-ability pupils further. Pupils are articulate and are able to discuss topics thoroughly.
- Pupils achieve particularly well in GCSE art and design, English language and literature, performing arts and science. Outcomes in history, religious education and in information and communication technology are less strong but improving due to better teaching. Skilful questioning in English in the study of Macbeth helps pupils to demonstrate an understanding of higher-level concepts.
- Year 7 catch-up funding is having a greater impact in English than mathematics in helping pupils reach age-related expectation. Pupil premium funding is used effectively to improve progress in English but is having less impact in mathematics.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided with specific targeted interventions that help them to progress well so that they achieve closer to the national average. However, pupils of lower ability in key stage 3 are not making the same good progress in mathematics as they do in science. At times misconceptions are not dealt with swiftly enough, particularly in key stage 1. In some classes across the school, the most able pupils do not develop the depth of knowledge and understanding of which they are capable.
- More than half of the cohort in Year 11 are entered for the English Baccalaureate and the percentage achieving well is higher than the national average. Current progress indicates that this positive outcome is set to continue.
- Due to the strong outcomes at the end of key stage 4, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- In 2016, the number of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was below that of other pupils nationally. This year, the more focused teaching of phonics is leading to improvements in pupils' phonic knowledge. However, lower-attaining pupils in Year 2 are not able to use phonics to decode words, so they struggle with their reading and writing. As a result, at key stage 1, the reading and writing of pupils of low ability and those that are disadvantaged are not improving quickly or securely enough.
- In Year 1 there is strong mastery in mathematics for the most able, but in Year 2 there is not the opportunity for them to develop greater depth in their learning. This is due at times to a focus on activities rather than developing mathematical skills.

## Early years provision

## Outstanding

- The leadership of early years foundation stage is exemplary. The leader knows the expectations of the framework exceptionally well and as a result tracking of children is detailed and precise. Information is gathered through observations by adults working with children and in partnership with parents. This ensures that planning and provision are carefully mapped to individuals' needs.
- Teaching is carefully planned to develop children's interests and fascinations. Questioning is sophisticated with timely interventions so that children make progress at a rate appropriate to their starting points.
- Phonics teaching is highly effective and misconceptions are addressed quickly but with sufficient time to embed learning. Children use the sounds they learn in their reading to help them with their independent writing work.
- Children's work demonstrates that they are making rapid and sustained progress over time. Children who joined the school in Reception at a lower level of development than their peers are catching up quickly.
- The wide selection of books available for children encourages them to explore a wide range of provision across all the early learning goals.
- More children than in most schools typically leave Reception ready to start Year 1.
- The learning environment is well organised, stimulating and safe. It provides a wide variety of resources that encourage children to play, explore and learn. Children behave well and are kept safe. Adults show exemplary care for the children.



## School details

Unique reference number	116407
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10026218

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1350
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anne Stanhope
Headteacher	Paul Nicholson
Telephone number	01962 854757
Website	<a href="http://www.westgate.hants.sch.uk">www.westgate.hants.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:adminoffice@westgate.hants.sch.uk">adminoffice@westgate.hants.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	12–13 July 2012

## Information about this school

- The school was formed as an all-through mixed school in September 2014 with children and pupils from early years to key stage 4. Previously the school had been an 11 to 16 school. Currently there are pupils in early years and key stages 1, 3 and 4. Of the 1,350 pupils on roll, 180 are in the primary phase.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support for special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible to free school meals is well below the national average.
- A very small number of pupils attend alternative educational provision at The Bridge Education Centre on a part-time basis.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 30 part-lessons and also undertook a number of learning walks. Several lessons were observed jointly with senior leaders. In practically all lessons visited, inspectors looked at pupils' work in books.
- Inspectors examined a selection of books from three year groups in key stages 3 and 4 and undertook a scrutiny of work from the early years foundation stage and key stage 1.
- Inspectors met with several groups of pupils and talked to others informally during breaktimes. Discussions were held with staff, including pastoral and academic senior and middle leaders.
- Two meetings were held with governors: one with the chair of the governing body and four other governors and one with the chair of the governing body. A meeting was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 274 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as the written comments submitted by 192 parents. Inspectors also spoke informally to parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of school documentation. This included the school's evaluation of its performance, the school's plan for improvement for 2016/17, information about standards and progress, logs about behaviour and attendance as well as a range of policies.

## Inspection team

Christopher Lee, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Caroline Walshe	Ofsted Inspector
Christine Bulmer	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Roessler	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Corr	Ofsted Inspector

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