

# West Gate School

Glenfield Road, Leicester, Leicestershire LE3 6DG

## Inspection dates

16–17 October 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Inadequate</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Inadequate</b>
16 to 19 study programmes	<b>Inadequate</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- Leaders, including governors, have not ensured that safeguarding arrangements are effective. The school's record-keeping of safeguarding concerns is poor. Leaders do not know what actions are taken in response to concerns raised about pupils' welfare.
- Leaders' checks on safeguarding are too lax. Not all staff follow the school's safeguarding policy.
- Inadequate safeguarding arrangements mean that provision in the early years and in the 16-19 phase is also inadequate.
- Teachers do not routinely match activities to help pupils make good progress. The most able pupils are not challenged consistently.
- The leadership of mathematics is weak. Pupils underperform in this subject.
- Leaders do not use students' prior achievement information to check they are making good progress in the sixth form.
- Pupils do not consistently show respect to each other or listen to each other's views.
- Pupils' ability to use and apply their mathematical knowledge to solve problems is underdeveloped.
- Not all teaching assistants support pupils' learning as well as they should.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have developed a curriculum that provides exciting opportunities for pupils.
- The assistant headteachers and middle leaders are beginning to improve the quality of teaching.
- The quality of teaching in the early years and key stage 1 is good.
- There are effective transition arrangements in place to support students to enrol in colleges when they leave the school. All who left the school last summer have continued in education or training.
- Pupils' reading skills are developed well. Older pupils read fluently.

## Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

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

- Leaders and governors must urgently address the weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements by:
  - ensuring that there are comprehensive records of the actions leaders take in response to safeguarding concerns
  - developing a record-keeping system that enables leaders to access information easily
  - informing relevant people of the actions leaders take in response to concerns raised
  - analysing the frequency and circumstances of physical restraints so they can be reduced
  - maintaining a record of staff training for safeguarding so that staff who may have missed training can be offered further training
  - ensuring that the designated lead for safeguarding quality assures the work of the deputy designated leaders for safeguarding, so that school policies and procedures are followed to keep children, pupils and students safe
  - ensuring that governors receive appropriate training to hold school leaders to account for this area of leadership.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - taking swift action when weaknesses in teaching have been identified
  - ensuring that the leadership of mathematics supports teachers to improve the quality of teaching in this subject.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - using the information from assessments to set pupils challenging work, particularly for the most able
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge to solve problems
  - ensuring that teaching assistants are fully aware of pupils' personal targets in order to support pupils' learning
  - informing pupils of the purpose of their learning so they better understand why they are completing set tasks.

- Improve pupils' personal development by:
  - improving engagement in their learning by matching the activities to meet their needs
  - encouraging pupils to listen consistently to each other's views.
- Improve the quality of leadership and teaching in the sixth form by:
  - using students' assessment information from the end of key stage 4 to ensure that they are on the right courses and make good progress from their starting points
  - checking students' understanding of what they are learning and using this information to plan the next steps.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Inadequate

- Senior leaders and the governing body have not ensured that safeguarding arrangements are effective. Leaders' self-evaluation of safeguarding arrangements is over generous. The quality of the record-keeping of concerns is weak.
- Senior leaders have not taken swift enough action to improve the teaching of mathematics. Leaders have known that the outcomes for mathematics have been below that of English for a long period of time. Action taken to make improvements in mathematics has been too slow.
- Senior leaders are accurate in their judgements about the quality of teaching. However, leaders have not taken swift enough action to improve teaching rapidly to ensure that it is consistently good. Consequently, teaching requires improvement.
- Leaders are increasingly holding teachers accountable for their performance. They set measurable targets for teachers to achieve. Leaders review the performance of teachers and support is put in place for those who are judged not to be meeting their targets. Poor performance from teachers is not accepted.
- Middle leaders have benefited from external training by the local authority on holding teachers to account for their performance. They have started to scrutinise teachers' planning, observe lessons and moderate pupils' work. However, it is too soon to judge the impact of their work, because many of the teachers they are supporting are new to the school this term. Teachers have not had enough time to implement fully the recent advice middle leaders have provided.
- The large majority of staff who answered the staff survey agreed that leaders provide opportunities to support the professional development of staff. Middle leaders are complimentary about the support they have received from senior leaders to carry out their roles.
- The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to develop appropriate academic and vocational skills, with different pathways tailored to meet pupils' needs. The curriculum is greatly enhanced by a range of enrichment activities. Pupils learn about horticulture by planting vegetables in raised beds. They learn more about the environment as part of the outdoor learning programme. Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is improving.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils respect different cultures and ethnicities. They have recently studied Black History month and could explain, for example, why Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white person. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of equality and learn to respect that people have different needs. However, there are occasions when pupils do not listen to each other as well as they should.
- The school promotes fundamental British values well. The pupils learn about democracy and elect a school council. In addition, four students have been elected to the Leicester City Young People's Council to promote the aspirations of young people who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities in the local area.

- Leaders have evaluated how effectively additional funding has been allocated to support disadvantaged pupils. The pupil premium funding has promoted pupils' literacy skills and engagement in learning. There has been a reduction in the number of behavioural incidents for this group of pupils.
- The catch-up premium for Year 7 pupils has supported pupils to improve their communication skills, as well as their numeracy and literacy skills. All pupils in Year 7 made good progress last year. However, pupils made better progress in English than they did in mathematics.
- The primary school physical education and sport funding has been used well to enable pupils to play against other local schools in a range of tournaments. The school has achieved success and won the county boccia tournament.

### **Governance of the school**

- The governing body is unaware of the weaknesses in the school's safeguarding arrangements. Governors have not received enough training about safeguarding to be able to hold school leaders to account for this aspect of leadership.
- Governors have raised the level of challenge they provide leaders with about the academic and vocational progress pupils are making. Following a review of governance, members of the governing body have attended training from the local authority. They now ask more searching questions to leaders about the curriculum and pupils' progress.
- Governors regularly visit the school, talk with pupils and staff, and report back their findings to the rest of the governing body. They have requested information from the local authority and leaders from other schools, who have visited the school, to provide them with an external view of the school's performance. They have analysed these reports and are aware of some of the strengths and weaknesses of the school's performance.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. Leaders have not ensured that they have followed the statutory advice issued by the Secretary of State or their own safeguarding policy. Staff do not consistently record actions taken following concerns raised about a child's welfare. Consequently, leaders do not know whether the correct actions were taken in response to concerns raised, or whether the school's response was timely. Senior leaders have not checked the work of safeguarding leads, to ensure that they have done everything possible to keep pupils safe.
- When school staff raise concern about a pupil's welfare, they are not always kept informed about how their concern has been managed. Some staff have not challenged designated leaders for safeguarding well enough to keep them updated on the response to concerns raised.
- The school's record-keeping makes it difficult for leaders to obtain a chronology of events about individual children, because information is stored in separate places.
- Leaders have not kept a record of safeguarding training attended by staff until recently. They do not know which staff have attended safeguarding training in the last

academic year. As a result, some staff may have missed training with leaders not being aware of this.

- Leaders have not analysed the number of incidents which require staff to use physical restraint. They have not looked closely at the reasons for the use of physical restraint to try to reduce the number of incidents. Records are kept of incidents which have required physical restraint, and parents and carers are informed when incidents have occurred. However, not all staff who may have been involved in an incident sign to say they have read the record. In addition, staff do not record pupils' views of these incidents. The record-keeping of these incidents is not sufficiently detailed. Leaders have not ensured that everyone involved in the incidents has given their view.
- The staff who have received safeguarding training know how to identify different types of abuse and how to report their concerns to leaders in the school. All staff who completed the staff survey said they felt pupils were safe in the school.
- The procedures for the administration of medicines are satisfactory. Medicines are securely stored, and staff are trained to administer the medication.
- Pupils learn about staying safe as part of the curriculum. Pupils learn how to stay safe on the internet and about road safety. Older pupils have learned about the dangers of online grooming.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Requires improvement**

- Teachers do not communicate the purpose of the lessons to pupils well enough. Too often, pupils complete activities without understanding their purpose. Pupils do not gain a deep understanding of their learning.
- Teachers do not consistently match the pupils' learning to their abilities. The most able pupils are not challenged as well as they should be.
- Teachers do not consistently challenge pupils in mathematics. Teachers do not use their assessments of pupils' abilities to deepen pupils' knowledge. Too often, the most able pupils are not challenged to deepen their mathematical knowledge. Furthermore, there are few opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge to problem solve.
- The support provided by teaching assistants is variable. There is some very effective support provided by the majority of teaching assistants. They know the pupils well and are aware of the next steps for the pupils' learning. This enables the pupils to make good progress. On the other hand, some teaching assistants do not engage well enough with pupils. They are not aware of the pupils' learning targets. Consequently, these pupils' learning is not developed as well as it should be.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Pupils are taught sounds well and then blend the sounds to read words. Teachers successfully promote pupils' fluency in reading. However, there are occasions when teachers do not challenge the most able pupils to read for themselves, or to read more difficult texts.
- In the more effective examples of teaching, pupils understand what they are learning because it is clearly communicated to them. Staff are skilled in using symbols to communicate with pupils and enable pupils to understand their learning. In one lesson,

pupils used symbols to follow instructions. They matched words to describe characters from the story 'Little Red Riding Hood'. All pupils were highly engaged.

- Teachers support pupils to achieve the planned outcomes which are set out in the pupils' education, health and care plans. Teachers' and teaching assistants' assessments of pupils' abilities are detailed. However, teachers do not use this information well enough to plan the next steps to develop pupils' knowledge and skills, particularly for the most able.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' achievements are accurate. There are secure procedures in place to moderate pupils' work internally and externally. Teachers from other schools and moderators from the local authority have judged that the school's assessments are accurate.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils do not demonstrate consistently positive attitudes towards each other or their learning. There are occasions when pupils talk over each other and do not listen to each other's views. In addition, some pupils become disengaged in their learning.
- Pupils say that bullying can occur but that the staff deal it with it very well. Pupils point to posters around the school which advise them to be a friend and not a bully. They say they can talk to any adult if they have a worry. Pupils say they feel safe around the school.
- Staff help to promote pupils' emotional well-being by encouraging them to take part in clubs. A range of clubs operate on a Friday afternoon, including science club, sensory club and Bollywood club. Pupils enjoy these clubs, which provide an opportunity for pupils to develop their social and communication skills.
- Pupils are given roles of responsibility in classrooms and around the school. Pupils produce West Gate Radio, which is broadcast around the school at lunchtime. They debate life at the school and choose the songs to play.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' behaviour in classes and around the school is good. When pupils become disengaged, staff manage these situations effectively, re-engaging pupils in their learning quickly, so that the learning of others is not disrupted. Pupils' behaviour at lunchtime is good. The relationships between staff and pupils are positive and pupils take care to leave the dining room tidy when they have finished eating lunch.
- At breaktimes, pupils cooperate well. Pupils use the apparatus safely and organise games between themselves.
- Pupils' attendance last year was in line with the national average for similar schools. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is below that of similar schools.

The family support worker has worked closely with pupils who had very low attendance and there have been marked improvements in some of these pupils' attendance. Current attendance is much higher than the 2017/18 national average.

- The number of exclusions is very low. Staff work well with a range of agencies to support pupils to remain in education.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Pupils do not make as much progress as they should in mathematics. Pupils do not develop their problem-solving skills to gain a deep understanding of mathematics.
- The most able pupils are not challenged as well as they should be. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that pupils in the same classes are consistently completing the same tasks. The most able are not challenged to complete more difficult work.
- Pupils make good progress in phonics and learn to read fluently. However, the most able are not encouraged to read independently in lessons to develop their comprehension skills. This limits their progress.
- Pupils make good progress in the early years and during key stage 1. They start school with cognitive abilities well below those typical for their chronological age. By the end of key stage 1, they have begun to catch up with their communication skills.
- Pupils achieve well in physical education. A group of pupils were part of the special educational needs Leicester City Football Club, which won the premier league. Pupils understand the importance of exercise and healthy eating.
- Pupils enjoy art work and achieve well. Some pupils have studied the work of Alfred Wallis, who painted Cornish landscapes, as part of their coastal topic. They used chalk and sugar paper to produce high-quality pictures in a similar style to the artist.
- Pupils receive good-quality careers advice and guidance. Older pupils receive advice on how to write application letters for colleges. All pupils who attended work experience placements last year successfully completed the placements. All pupils who left the school last year secured a place in further education. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.

### Early years provision

### Inadequate

- The early years is inadequate because safeguarding failings in whole-school arrangements apply equally to this part of the school.
- Children start school with abilities well below those typical of children of the same age. Children continue to be taught the early years curriculum into key stage 1 because it meets their needs. There is a strong focus on English and mathematics.
- Children are invited to the school for several visits to ensure a smooth transition into the school. In addition, the early years leader has established clear routines in the classroom which the children understand and follow. This supports a calm and orderly environment.
- The leadership of the early years is good. The leader knows the children well. Activities are matched to children's abilities and their progress is closely tracked.



- The relationship with parents is good. Parents and staff share 'wow' moments to celebrate children's achievements. A home-school diary is completed daily to ensure that communication is up to date. The early years leader also communicates with outside agencies, including speech and language therapists, to ensure that the children's needs are met.

## 16 to 19 study programmes

## Inadequate

- The sixth-form provision is inadequate because safeguarding failings in whole-school arrangements apply equally to this part of the school.
- Other aspects of leadership and provision require improvement. For example, leaders have not tracked the progress of students from the end of key stage 4 to the end of the sixth form. This makes it difficult for leaders to assess whether students have made good progress during this key stage.
- Teachers do not match activities consistently to students' abilities. This slows students' progress. In addition, teachers do not check students' understanding of their learning well enough. Students on occasion become disengaged in their learning.
- Students' behaviour deteriorates when they become disengaged. Not all staff use clear, direct instructions to support students to improve their behaviour quickly and thus learning often slows when this is the case.
- In the more effective examples of teaching, the activities are matched to students' needs. During a cookery session, students were actively involved in following instructions to bake an apple crumble. Students used symbols to understand the instructions and mixed the ingredients appropriately. They were highly engaged and focused.
- Students study a range of vocational courses designed to help them prepare for independent living and the workplace. Students have training to support them to travel on their own and are encouraged to use their bus passes. Some students also continue to learn English and mathematics. The school has provision for the most able students to take GCSEs.
- Careers advice and guidance is of a good quality. Students have access to an independent careers adviser to give them impartial advice. At their person-centred reviews, students are able to plan their courses, and discuss work experience opportunities and appropriate destinations for when they leave the school. Students undertake several visits to colleges and specialist provisions to ensure that they enrol in the most appropriate provision.
- Leaders keep in touch with those students who are at college to track their progress. These students come back into school to tell current students what life is like at college. This helps to reassure students and raises their expectations of what they can achieve.

## School details

Unique reference number	131099
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10048244

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

Type of school	All-through special
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	178
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	22
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michel Laurent-Regisse
Headteacher	Denise Williams
Telephone number	01162 552187
Website	<a href="http://www.westgate.leicester.sch.uk">www.westgate.leicester.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@westgate.leicester.sch.uk">office@westgate.leicester.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	27-28 April 2016

## Information about this school

- West Gate School is a maintained special school for pupils who have moderate learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties, complex needs, profound and multiple-learning difficulties and autistic spectrum disorders. Currently, around three fifths of pupils have severe learning difficulties. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- Students in the post-16 provision attend the learning centre at the New College where they can access courses at the college.
- Some pupils attend Lodge Farm, Leicestershire, on a part-time basis to learn about horticulture and animal care.

- Three quarters of the pupils are boys.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is more than double the national average.
- Around half the pupils are White British. The next-largest minority ethnic group is Asian or Asian British Indian, who make up about an eighth of the school's population.
- There has been a large turnover of staff in the last academic year. A significant number of teachers have joined the school this term.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons with school leaders at both school sites. Inspectors observed senior leaders providing feedback to teachers following observations of lessons.
- Inspectors met with two groups of pupils and observed pupils at breaktime and at lunchtime. They looked at pupils' work and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors held meetings with school leaders, teachers, teaching assistants and support staff. Two meetings were held with school governors. Inspectors also spoke by telephone with the local authority raising achievement partner and with a children's service manager.
- Inspectors met informally with parents at the start of the school day. They also reviewed the 15 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire, and the 14 responses to the free-text service provided by Ofsted.
- Inspectors reviewed the 60 responses to the staff survey and the two responses to the pupils' survey.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, minutes of meetings of the board of governors, the school's most recent information on pupils' achievement, and information related to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

## Inspection team

Martin Finch, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Julian Scholefield	Ofsted Inspector
Janis Warren	Ofsted Inspector

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