

Westhouses Primary School

Bolden Terrace, Westhouses, Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 5AF

Inspection dates

6–7 February 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not ensured that teaching is consistently good. Pupils do not achieve as well as they should in all subjects, or in all classes.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school's performance is overgenerous. Their plans, including those for the early years, do not set out the priorities or actions needed to bring about improvements sufficiently well.
- The assessment of pupils' starting points is inaccurate. Leaders therefore are not always sure how well pupils, including those with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are progressing.
- Leaders do not check closely enough what impact additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is having on their progress.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils are not consistently high. In some subjects, they do not provide pupils with sufficient challenge.
- Some teachers do not use information about pupils' prior learning to inform their planning, particularly for pupils with SEND.
- Phonics is not consistently well taught.
- Teachers do not always insist that pupils apply their grammar, punctuation and spelling skills accurately in all aspects of their written work.
- In the early years, adults do not promote children's use of language effectively. Too few children achieve a good level of development by the time they leave the Reception class.
- Recent changes to English and mathematics curriculum plans are not yet fully embedded.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders and governors have a shared vision for the school. Pupils' attitudes to learning have improved as a result of leaders' actions.
- Pupils enjoy reading. New strategies for the teaching of reading are beginning to have a positive impact.
- Pupils look after each other and readily accept those who are different from themselves. They have a strong sense of community and a clear understanding of British values.
- The progress and attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 are improving.
- The quality of mathematics teaching is improving.
- Pupils behave well. They feel happy, safe and well cared for.
- Pupils, staff and parents and carers are very positive about the school's nurturing and supportive environment.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - plans for improvement are based on an accurate evaluation of the school’s strengths and weaknesses
 - leaders have a precise understanding of pupils’ progress from their starting points, including pupils with SEND
 - leaders monitor and evaluate closely the impact of additional funding received for disadvantaged pupils on their progress
 - leaders implement the revised curriculum plans for English and mathematics fully.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - teachers have high expectations of what all pupils can achieve
 - teachers make effective use of information about pupils’ progress to plan learning that is appropriately challenging for all pupils, particularly the most able
 - teaching meets the needs of pupils with SEND more effectively, so that these pupils consistently make the progress of which they are capable
 - teachers insist that pupils use their grammar, punctuation and spelling skills accurately in all their written work
 - teachers provide pupils with frequent opportunities to practise their phonics skills.
- In the early years, ensure that adults develop children’s language skills consistently well.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders' evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is inaccurate. They do not use the wide range of information available to them to identify accurately all the priorities for improvement. Some key areas in need of improvement are omitted from their plans, while other aspects lack clarity. In some instances, leaders' actions have only recently begun to bring about positive changes.
- Leaders do not know how much progress pupils are making, including pupils with SEND, because they do not measure progress from appropriate starting points. As a result, they do not know how effective strategies to support pupils who require additional guidance are at helping these pupils make better progress.
- Leaders have not ensured that the quality of teaching has remained consistently good. Since the previous inspection, the overall quality of teaching has declined. Pupils do not achieve as well as they should.
- Leaders have used the funding for disadvantaged pupils to tackle the barriers to learning that these pupils face. However, they do not know which strategies have been successful, and which have not, so cannot be confident that the funding is having a positive impact on raising achievement.
- Recent changes to the curriculum for English and mathematics are not yet embedded sufficiently well to ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress. Curriculum plans for subjects such as science and geography are not well developed.
- The school has a friendly, inclusive and respectful ethos. The headteacher and governors have a shared vision for the school to be, 'welcoming, hardworking, positive and supportive' to all.
- Leaders provide teachers with a range of training opportunities that are improving their practice. Staff feel motivated, respected and supported in their roles.
- Parents are very positive about their children's experiences in school. Those parents who spoke with the inspector emphasised the warm and friendly nature of the school and its community feel. As one parent stated, 'Children help and support each other, encouraging each other to do the best that they can.'
- Leaders' actions to improve pupils' attitudes to learning have had a positive impact. Through an agreed set of 'non-negotiables', most pupils understand what is expected of them and appreciate the support of adults to help them flourish. Due to leaders' consistent and uncompromising approach, almost all pupils behave well.
- Leaders monitor closely pupils' attendance and behaviour, identifying any concerns and taking appropriate actions to successfully bring about improvements.
- The quality of leadership is improving, because subject leaders are now taking greater responsibility to make improvements in their areas. The school therefore has an increasing capacity to improve. For example, the leader of mathematics has taken decisive action to ensure that pupils are challenged by their learning. However, subject leaders' actions have only recently begun to have an impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders make considered decisions about the use of the additional funding for physical

education (PE) and sport. Pupils take part in a range of sports and understand the importance of living healthy lifestyles. Leaders ensure that all pupils are encouraged to participate.

- Mindful of their limits as a small school, leaders have developed close links with a local schools partnership, as well as a teaching school alliance, through which teachers receive support to improve their practice. For example, the support has recently enabled teachers to be more accurate in their assessments of what pupils know and can do.
- Leaders provide parents with regular opportunities to engage with their children's learning, for example through workshops focused on reading, phonics and mathematics. Parents value these sessions since they help them to understand how to support their children's learning more effectively.

Governance of the school

- Governors are well informed, committed and supportive of the headteacher and other school leaders. However, they have not ensured that the school's weaknesses were identified or tackled quickly enough.
- Governors complete relevant training and carry out visits to the school regularly to check on the quality of particular aspects of the school's provision.
- Governors are becoming increasingly skilled at challenging leaders and holding them to account, for instance for pupils' outcomes, and for their spending of the physical education and sports premium and the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors understand their responsibilities for safeguarding. An experienced governor ensures that the school's safeguarding practices and procedures are fit for purpose.
- The local authority provides leaders with some effective support to improve the quality of teaching and learning, for example through the school's involvement in 'Project Read'. A school improvement adviser has supported the leader of mathematics to become more adept at his role. However, the local authority's support has been relatively limited in scope, with no guidance regarding, for example, the early years provision.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils, staff and parents agree that the school is a safe place to learn.
- Leaders responsible for safeguarding have received appropriate and recent training to support them in carrying out their roles effectively. They understand their responsibilities with regard to radicalisation and extremism and its relevance to the local context.
- Leaders ensure that all the correct checks are completed before an adult starts to work or volunteer at the school. No visitors can access the building without the knowledge of a member of staff.
- Leaders complete and submit an annual safeguarding audit to the local authority. This

allows leaders to identify and swiftly rectify any weaknesses in their safeguarding practices or procedures.

- All staff receive regular training. They know how to make a referral if they have any concerns and are confident leaders will take action.
- Leaders update pupils' records in a timely manner and include an appropriate level of detail about any concerns and any actions taken to protect pupils.
- Pupils are taught how to stay safe. For instance, older pupils receive guidance about safely riding their bikes, while all pupils learn about abuse and know they can phone Childline for help.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not yet good enough to ensure that all pupils make strong and sustained progress across the curriculum. Not all pupils attain as well as they should. Teachers do not challenge all pupils to do well, particularly the most able. Expectations are sometimes too low.
- Some teachers do not use what they know about pupils' prior learning to inform their planning. This sometimes leads to pupils' learning being moved on either too swiftly or too slowly.
- Teaching does not meet the needs of pupils with SEND well enough. Teachers do not always adapt learning consistently well so that these pupils make the progress they should.
- Teachers ensure that pupils learn a wide range of spelling, punctuation and grammar skills. They do not, however, insist that pupils use these skills accurately in their everyday writing, particularly in subjects other than English.
- The teaching of phonics is not consistently strong. Adults help pupils to split words up and blend letter sounds together but they do not always give pupils the opportunity to practise and consolidate their learning.
- Pupils are beginning to take responsibility for their learning. 'Snakes and ladders' assessment sheets help them track their own progress. They are becoming increasingly confident at reflecting on their learning and explaining what they need to do to move onto the next stage.
- Leaders' involvement in 'Project Read' has resulted in the successful introduction of new strategies to promote reading. Increasingly, teachers use a range of different approaches to develop pupils' inference and comprehension skills. They encourage pupils to talk more and explain their ideas. However, these new approaches have only recently begun to have an impact on pupils' progress.
- Pupils enjoy reading. Those who the inspector heard read did so with fluency and expression. They displayed an appropriate level of comprehension, understanding demanding words such as 'languishing' and 'bilious'. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about their choice of book and how frequently they read.
- There are some examples of effective teaching in school. Some teachers display strong subject knowledge and use it to good effect. They use questions well to probe pupils'

thinking, enabling them to make effective links between different areas of learning and use their prior knowledge to deepen their understanding.

- The teaching of mathematics is improving across the school. New strategies are helping teachers to plan learning that moves pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding to the next stage. For instance, a review of Year 6 pupils' workbooks revealed how quickly pupils had learned to apply the basic rules of algebra and could provide reasoned explanations for their answers. However, these improvements are recent and are not consistent across all classes.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are positive. The majority of pupils respond promptly to requests from adults and have good attitudes to learning.
- Pupils are interested and engage well with their learning. They share their ideas readily with their peers and are increasingly willing to persevere and seek their own solutions before asking for help.
- Pupils enjoy celebrating their successes through the weekly celebration assembly.
- Pupils are well aware of different types of bullying, including cyber bullying. They are confident that little, if any, bullying takes place in school. Pupils who spoke with the inspector all said they had someone to talk to if they needed support. Alternatively, they know they can share their concerns with an adult through the class 'worry boxes'.
- Pupils of all ages mix well together. They enjoy taking on a wide range of leadership responsibilities, whether it be as an elected member of the school council, as a mini-leader supporting playtime activities, or as a member of the sports crew.
- This is a tolerant and inclusive school. Pupils learn about a range of different faiths and cultures. Those who spoke with the inspector explained very eloquently about the different aspects of British values, including individual liberty and freedom of speech. They have a clear view of their own, and others', worth.
- Pupils feel safe in school and know how to reduce the risks they may face elsewhere. For example, during an assembly on 'Safer Internet Day', pupils' contributions reflected a comprehensive understanding of how they can stay safe online.
- Parents value the school's strong sense of community spirit and its nurturing environment. Those who spoke with the inspector stressed how easy it is to speak with their children's teachers if they had any concerns. Almost all parents who responded to the online Ofsted survey, Parent View, said that their children are safe, well looked after and happy in school.
- While many pupils take pride in their work and present it well, a minority of pupils allow the poor quality of their handwriting and attention to detail to detract from the quality of their learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around school and in class. They are kind and caring to each other. There are few incidents of poor behaviour, and no records of pupils repeating incidents.
- Teachers apply the behaviour policy consistently. Strategies to refocus pupils' attention, when it does wander, are effective.
- Pupils' attendance has been in line with the national average for the last three years. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has decreased and in 2018 it was below the national average.
- No pupils have been excluded from school over the past three years.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable in all subjects. There are notable inconsistencies in the progress and attainment of pupils across different year groups.
- Pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1 and lower key stage 2 do not make the progress they should, particularly in mathematics and writing. These pupils are not catching up with their peers, and gaps in their learning sometimes go unnoticed.
- Pupils' progress in reading and mathematics, in key stage 2, has improved over the last three years, but has remained below the national average. Over time, too few key stage 2 pupils have attained the higher standards in these two subjects.
- The proportion of pupils who are successful in the phonics screening check has been below the national average for the last two years. However, a higher proportion of pupils currently in Year 1 are on track to achieve the required standard.
- In 2018, Year 6 pupils made strong progress in writing. However, pupils' progress in writing was not consistently good across all year groups.
- The proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in grammar, punctuation and spelling has been above the national average for the last two years. However, too few pupils attain the higher standard.
- Over time, the proportion of pupils at the end of Year 2 attaining the expected and higher standards in mathematics has remained close to the national averages.
- Overall, current pupils are making good progress in mathematics across all year groups.
- The progress of pupils currently in Year 6 is strong, including in reading, writing and mathematics. These pupils are being prepared well for the next stage in their education.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has been below the national average for the last three years. Not all children are well prepared for Year 1.

- Leaders have not evaluated well enough why children do not achieve as well as they should. Their plans to develop the setting do not make clear what the weaknesses are or how they will tackle them.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum is carefully planned to cover all the areas of learning, as well as being responsive to the needs and interests of the children. However, they have not ensured that there is an appropriate balance of teacher-led and child-initiated activities. Nor have they ensured that adults consistently use opportunities initiated by children to promote children's use of language.
- Leaders provide a positive and welcoming environment. Children have access to a range of different resources, both inside and outdoors, helping to engage them and promote a love of learning. They know what is expected of them and follow well-established routines to keep them safe. Children are respectful of adults and each other.
- Leaders' assessments of children on entry to the provision are accurate. Adults make effective use of journals to monitor children's learning closely and plan their next steps. Leaders regularly track the progress made by children from their individual starting points. Their assessments have been verified externally.
- Children share their resources readily and take turns willingly, for instance while working together to design their own train track. They display positive attitudes and some show considerable concentration and persistence when engaged with an activity, seeing it through to completion.
- The leader of the early years has taken advantage of valuable external support available from local schools to make some improvements the quality of the provision.
- Leaders nurture positive links between home and school. They regularly invite parents into school and an increasing number of parents contribute to their children's learning, for example through an online assessment tool.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective. Adults have received appropriate training and know how to keep children safe.
- Leaders have close links with local nurseries and make timely visits prior to children starting at the school. Children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 frequently share aspects of their learning and mingle together during social times. This ensures that children move smoothly through to the next phase of their education.

School details

Unique reference number	112508
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10057673

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	83
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Mrs Louise Gregory
Headteacher	Mrs Juliette Whitby
Telephone number	01773 832518
Website	www.westhouses.derbyshire.sch.uk
Email address	headteacher@westhouses.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 November 2015

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in January 2016. Since then, two new teachers have joined the school and a new chair of governors has been appointed.
- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. There are three classes, each containing mixed-year groups of pupils.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below that seen nationally.
- The school runs its own breakfast club and after-school club, both of which are well attended.
- The school is a member of the 5 Pits Partnership and the Alfreton Nursery Teaching School Alliance.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in 10 lessons. Nine of these lessons were visited jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector looked at pupils' work in lessons and reviewed a sample of pupils' books covering a range of abilities and year groups. The inspector also reviewed learning journals for children in the early years.
- The inspector listened to pupils read. She also spoke with pupils in a discussion group and informally during lessons and at playtime.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, at playtime and as pupils moved around the school. She also observed pupils' learning and behaviour in an assembly.
- The inspector held a number of meetings with the headteacher and subject leaders. She met with two members of the governing body, including the chair. The inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector met with parents at the start of the school day. She also considered the 20 responses from Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including 16 responses made through the free-text service, and the responses to a parent survey carried out by the school.
- The inspector took into account the seven responses from the staff online survey.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of documentation, including the school improvement plan and the self-evaluation summary, safeguarding procedures and records, and minutes of meetings of the governing body. She checked the school's single central record and the school's system for recruiting staff. She also considered information about pupils' progress and achievement, attendance records, behaviour logs, plans related to additional government funding and external reports on the work of the school.
- The inspector reviewed information on the school's website.

Inspection team

Rachel Tordoff, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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