

# West Town Lane Academy

West Town Lane, Brislington, Bristol BS4 5DT

## Inspection dates

26–27 February 2019

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders have successfully raised the expectations of teachers and pupils. Staff have succeeded in making sure that pupils are encouraged to see their potential and are given the self-confidence to work hard and aim high.
- Leaders have ensured that teaching is good overall. All groups of pupils learn well and make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), disadvantaged pupils and the most able.
- The teaching of mathematics and reading is strong in most year groups. Pupils are confident and eager readers. They use and apply their knowledge to reason and problem solve with confidence. However, some inconsistencies in pupils' attainment remain. Pupils in Year 4 are not challenged as well as pupils in other year groups.
- Children make great strides in their learning when they start their education in early years, because of the strong care and opportunities offered. They make good progress across all areas of learning.
- Subject and phase leaders make a positive contribution to school improvement. Their work is beginning to have a notable impact on raising pupils' achievement. However, there is a lack of clarity in the roles and responsibilities of some of these leaders, which means that they are unable to monitor their subjects as well as they could.
- The curriculum, although broad and balanced, does not sufficiently encourage pupils to fully develop and extend their skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The additional funding for pupils with SEND and the pupil premium fund are spent precisely on addressing pupils' learning and emotional needs. As a result, these pupils make good progress, particularly in reading.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school; they are well behaved, feel safe and show care and consideration to others. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils are well prepared for life as citizens in modern Britain and for the next stages of their lives.
- Governors are ambitious for the school. They challenge leaders and insist that actions are taken when aspects of the school's work do not meet expectations. However, governors still do not receive sufficiently detailed and precise information for holding leaders to full account.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of leadership and management, by ensuring that:
  - leaders consolidate the improvements to the teaching of reading and mathematics so that pupils are consistently challenged in their learning in all year groups, particularly in Year 4
  - the roles and responsibilities of subject and phase leaders are clarified so that they ensure teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve, especially in mathematics and in literacy
  - the wider curriculum is further developed so that it provides rich opportunities for pupils to develop and deepen their skills in reading, writing and mathematics
  - governors are provided with regular and precise information on school performance so that they are better able to hold leaders to account for the progress and attainment of pupils in every year group.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- School leaders have been successful in motivating staff and pupils and they value everyone's contribution to school life. Consequently, staff and pupils alike aspire to do the best they can. Leaders have a good understanding of the school's many strengths and also the areas that require further work. Over the last 12 months, leaders' challenge and support have enabled the school to improve continually.
- There is an effective culture of teamwork and mutual respect across the school. Adults consistently put children first and very strong, caring relationships have been established. Excellent relationships are fostered with the local community and the great majority of parents and carers hold the school in the highest esteem.
- Leaders make detailed checks on the progress that pupils make. However, leaders' checks on teaching do not yet provide sufficient practical guidance and support to ensure that pupils in all year groups are challenged consistently. This means that some variations in pupils' progress and teaching persist in a few classes across the school, particularly in Year 4.
- Middle leaders are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. They have a secure understanding of the strengths and weakness of their phases and subjects. Subject leaders support their subjects well with advice, resources and ideas, which enable teachers to develop their expertise and become more confident in teaching the subject.
- There is, however, some lack of clarity in identifying the extent to which subject and phase leaders are responsible for checking the quality of teaching and learning across year groups. Not all subject leaders, for instance, are fully involved in the monitoring of their subject throughout the school. This slows their ability to take swift and effective action if pupil progress slips or teaching is below par, as was seen in some Year 4 classes.
- The leader responsible for SEND, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), is highly effective. She ensures that funding is precisely allocated, and the right support goes into place. The SENCo carefully assesses the impact of any interventions on these pupils' learning. As a result, well-targeted additional support helps these pupils make good progress and catch up with their peers.
- The additional pupil premium funding is spent wisely to enhance teaching provision and provide targeted additional support for disadvantaged pupils. As a result, the progress of these pupils continues to improve. More disadvantaged pupils now read with accuracy and understanding in key stage 2 and more are working at greater depth in their reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 1.
- The school has used the primary physical education (PE) and sport funding well to improve the quality and breadth of PE and sports provision. The range of after-school sports clubs has been extended and specialist staff employed to improve pupils' expertise in different sporting activities. There has been a sharp increase in participation in sporting activities.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is underpinned with a strong whole-school ethos. Teachers and teaching assistants skilfully promote spiritual and

social development in their questioning and encouragement of a reflective approach. A wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities and clubs, together with school visits and trips, enrich and extend pupils' experiences.

- Overall, the school teaches a broad curriculum. School leaders recognise that the wider curriculum needs to be better developed, however. Subjects including history, geography, science, religious education and the creative subjects, such as art and design, do not develop pupils' wider literacy and mathematical skills as well as they should.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors play a strong strategic role in the school. They are forward thinking and do not shy away from challenging leaders about ensuring the school continuously serves its community well.
- Governors are ambitious for their school and over the past 12 months have taken determined actions to improve their effectiveness. They have, for instance, improved the quality of their records of governor meetings, which now reflect a higher level of challenge. Governors have the confidence to ask searching questions of school leaders and insist that actions are taken when aspects of the school's work do not meet expectations.
- The information governors receive from school leaders, although improving, does not, as yet, enable them to have a full grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors do not receive the information they need in sufficient detail, and in the timeframes they need, to hold school leaders to full account.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Staff training is up to date and in line with current guidance. Staff apply their training well to keep pupils safe. Staff recruitment checks are conducted in line with current legislation.
- When safeguarding audits take place, leaders are swift to tackle any minor actions identified. Safeguarding records are organised systematically and show appropriate detail. Leaders with the designated responsibility for safeguarding are competent in working with external agencies and proactive and timely in the referrals they make.

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

**Good**

- Teaching is good and improving as a result of decisive action taken by senior leaders following the dip in progress made by pupils in reading and mathematics in 2018.
- Teachers know their pupils' strengths and weaknesses well and have high expectations for them. Staff's strong subject knowledge is used to good effect to design and teach engaging and exciting lessons. Access to accurate and detailed information about pupils' achievement enables teachers to provide very effective additional support and challenge, within and outside lessons, to all groups of pupils.

- Teachers and teaching assistants work in partnership to ensure that pupils' learning needs are met well over time. Teachers' assessments are usually accurate and used to plan work that builds on what pupils already know.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved in the last 12 months and is now strong. Sequences of teaching in mathematics are well thought out and this enables pupils to become fluent and confident in using number. Teaching routinely challenges pupils in most year groups to use and apply their knowledge very well to solve problems and to reason in mathematics.
- The teaching of reading enables pupils to read with the accuracy and understanding expected for their age. The number and range of fiction and non-fiction books available to pupils in class have greatly increased. Pupils are now developing habits of becoming regular and enthusiastic readers. One pupil told an inspector: 'I am reading more books now than I have in my entire life.' Pupils readily answer factual questions when asked about their reading and are able to offer sophisticated interpretations of their texts, reflecting their strong comprehension skills.
- The teaching of phonics enables most pupils to read accurately by the end of key stage 1. Class teaching, and well-targeted interventions, successfully help pupils who have previously struggled in Year 1 to secure the phonic code, to read accurately and catch up.
- The teaching of writing is good. Teaching enables the vast majority of pupils to write with the stamina, complexity and accuracy expected by school leaders.
- There are, however, variations in the level of challenge that pupils receive across classes in the same year group, especially in Year 4. On occasions, teaching is not closely matched to pupils' needs or does not provide sufficient opportunity for pupils to expand their ideas and deepen their understanding.
- Teaching does not fully enable pupils to use and apply their literacy and mathematical knowledge in a wide range of subjects.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff provide a consistent model of courtesy and consideration which sets a positive tone. They are unwaveringly patient and firm to help pupils understand right and wrong and how to show respect for others and themselves. Pupils are confident they are cared for well by the adults.
- The vast majority of pupils have good attitudes to learning and approach their lessons with enthusiasm. They participate well in lessons and confidently participate in discussions to share ideas and answer questions. However, at times when teaching does not fully capture their attention or motivate them well enough, a few pupils lose attention and can act in a silly or immature way.
- Most pupils are self-assured and confident. They value everyone's contribution and everyone is warmly accepted and cared for. Older pupils support younger ones

thoughtfully and with kindness.

- Pupils say that bullying is rare. They have confidence in staff to sort out any issues quickly. Pupils work and play well together and report that they feel safe and well supported by staff.
- Breakfast and after-school clubs provide a safe and calm start and end to the school day.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils know and understand the school's behaviour system and are very clear about what is expected of them. They are respectful to each other, staff and visitors and enjoy the pleasant and secure environment the school offers.
- Pupils are polite and demonstrate positive attitudes and pride in their school. Consequently, the school is a calm and orderly environment where pupils can excel.
- Pupils are welcoming to visitors, are curious and show good manners. They reply politely when greeted, sometimes offering a handshake, freely open doors for passing adults and readily offer their help. Pupils are proud of their school and take great care of their surroundings.
- Pupils' attendance is improving and is above the national average. Rates of exclusion are consistently low.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Inspection evidence, including a close scrutiny of the work in pupils' books, discussions with pupils and observations of learning, confirm that, across the school, all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, are making good progress in their academic and wider development and achievement.
- The progress made by pupils by the end of Year 6 in 2018 was average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. This was a fall compared with previous years, but inspection evidence shows that actions taken by school leaders have addressed this dip successfully. Current pupils are making stronger gains in their reading comprehension and in their mathematical skills.
- Pupils in key stage 2 read widely and often, and most demonstrate a good understanding of what they read. Recent improvement to the teaching of mathematics has led to an upturn in pupils' gains in their mathematical understanding. Most pupils show strong fluency in number and are developing sophisticated reasoning and problem-solving skills. There is, however, some variation in the levels of challenge across classes in a few year groups in key stage 2. Consequently, some books pupils choose to read in Year 4 are too easy and do not deepen their understanding.
- Pupils in Year 2 in 2018 made good progress during key stage 1, building on the good start made in their Reception Year. At key stage 1, the proportions of pupils that reached the expected standard, and of those working at greater depth, in reading, writing and mathematics, were higher than those seen nationally.

- Pupils achieve well in phonics, where standards at the school are rising year on year. In 2018, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 national phonics check was above the national average. This year, an even higher proportion of pupils are on track to achieve this standard, with little or no differences in achievement apparent between disadvantaged pupils and others.
- Pupils are making strong gains in their spelling and more are able with confidence to spell difficult words that allow them to write expressively. Pupils' workbooks show a steady improvement in their handwriting. Throughout the last year, pupils are becoming increasingly proficient at writing for a variety of audiences and styles and using grammatical constructions more closely linked to their age.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making progress as well as other pupils. Current school data, supported by work seen in pupils' books, shows little difference between these pupils and others nationally. The school uses its additional funding well to make sure that specific targeted help is well directed at these pupils so that they are able to take advantage of all the school has to offer.
- Pupils with SEND currently make good progress. Vigilant direction by the SENCo, a precise awareness of the needs of each of these pupils by class teachers, coupled with extra support sessions for those who need it, have led to many of these pupils making great gains in both their academic and social development.
- The most able pupils achieve well. They use an increasingly wide variety of grammatical devices to communicate effectively and some are developing sophisticated writing skills. Greater challenge over the past 12 months has given more frequent opportunities for them to develop their mathematical reasoning and to help them deepen their understanding in mathematics.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- Children join early years with knowledge and understanding broadly typical for their ages. They get off to a flying start, make good progress and leave well prepared for Year 1.
- The proportion of children that reached a good level of development in the early years foundation stage profile exceeded the national figure in 2018.
- Leadership of early years is strong. The early years leader is an effective practitioner who maintains a tight overview of the provision. She has a very good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in early years. Her high aspirations and determination that all children should succeed ensure children's good or better progress. Leaders are clearly focused on providing high-quality teaching and rich learning experiences for children.
- Children benefit from a rich and stimulating environment and interesting activities. The very well-resourced outdoor area encourages investigation and exploration. A wide range of writing materials encourages children to practise writing skills. Children concentrate as they choose from a plentiful array of books in the attractive reading area.
- Teachers assess children's progress effectively, identifying and planning suitable next steps. Well-structured teaching sessions and child-initiated learning support good

progress. Staff discussions with children help them develop their communication skills and extend their learning.

- Children have very well-developed social skills for their age and learn to take responsibility. They behave very well, responding well to adults' example of courtesy and their firm and friendly approach to teaching. The children are taught to share and take turns, and to show respect for one another and the equipment they use.
- The children are kept very safe. The care that staff members provide helps the children to feel happy and safe throughout the day.
- The needs of disadvantaged children are carefully considered and catered for. A highly individualised focus, coupled with effective teaching, ensure that these children make strong progress from their starting points.
- Communication with parents is effective. Parents contribute well to the assessment of their child's progress and celebration of achievement. They are highly positive about the provision. Parents who spoke with inspectors were all confident that their children are cared for well and are delighted with their children's progress.
- Statutory welfare requirements are met.



## School details

Unique reference number	137762
Local authority	City of Bristol
Inspection number	10053280

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	680
Appropriate authority	The board of trustees
Chair	Marianne Croft
Headteacher	Jeremy Hughes
Telephone number	01173 772295
Website	<a href="http://www.wtl.academy">www.wtl.academy</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@wtlacademy.bristol.sch.uk">head@wtlacademy.bristol.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	21 February 2018

## Information about this school

- West Town Lane Academy is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND or who are supported by an education, health and care plan, is below average.
- The school runs on-site breakfast- and after-school clubs, which are managed by the governing body.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in visits to lessons across the school, and reviewed pupils' work in books across a wide range of subjects.
- Inspectors talked with groups of pupils to seek their views about the school. Inspectors also listened to the views of pupils during lessons, breaktimes and lunchtimes. Inspectors listened to pupils read in Years 3 and 6.
- Inspectors held meetings with the deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher, phase leaders, subject leaders and the SENCo. A meeting was also held with three members of the governing body.
- Inspectors scrutinised a number of school documents including: the school's action plans; the school's view of its own performance; pupils' performance information; minutes of governing body meetings; records relating to behaviour; checks on teaching and learning; pupils' attendance information; and a range of safeguarding records.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at lunchtimes and breaktimes, and around the school.
- Inspectors considered 118 responses to the online survey, Parent View, the 60 responses from the free-text service and the 41 responses to the staff questionnaire. Inspectors also talked to parents during the inspection to seek their views of the school and the education their children receive. Inspectors talked to a range of staff and pupils to gather their views.
- An inspector visited the breakfast and after-school clubs.

## Inspection team

Michael Merchant, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Nick Sheppard	Ofsted Inspector
Ross Newman	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Horsnell	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. [www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings).

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2019