

Inspection of Westlands Community Primary School

Beeches Close, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 2SB

Inspection dates: 9–10 October 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this school enjoy learning and are proud of their achievements. Staff provide for pupils' academic, social and emotional needs well. Pupils are happy and understand that learning is important. They readily discuss how they use the 'key skills' that leaders introduced since the previous inspection. Pupils told us how they demonstrate 'staying positive' when doing things that are difficult.

Leaders place great importance on well-being for all at the school. They have created a calm and caring school. Pupils and staff build strong relationships and work well together. Pupils behave well. Most focus on their learning in classes very well. Pupils say that bullying is uncommon. Pupils feel confident that teachers deal with bullying well so that it does not continue.

Pupils value the diverse lifestyles and cultural backgrounds represented at the school. They are interested in each other's differences. Inspectors heard pupils sharing on the playground the different languages spoken at home.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Since the previous inspection, leaders have been developing the curriculum for subjects other than English and mathematics. Leaders' actions to improve the curriculum are working. They are further ahead in some subjects than others. In science, for example, pupils now study what they consider to be an exciting curriculum. Pupils do regular science investigations to explore further what they know about science. Teachers encourage pupils to ask questions about what they are learning. Pupils develop a strong understanding of scientific knowledge and skills.

In less well-developed areas of the curriculum, such as history, teachers are not clear about what pupils must know by the end of a unit of work. As a result, teachers do not always teach the important information that pupils must remember.

Leaders have made reading a very important part of the curriculum. Pupils develop a love of reading early on. Most pupils learn how to read capably. Teachers in Reception and key stage 1 teach the skills pupils need for early reading well. Some teachers in key stage 2 do not consistently follow the approach to phonics for older pupils who find learning to read difficult. As a result, some of these pupils cannot read well enough.

Leaders have substantially improved what staff provide for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers fully include pupils with SEND in all aspects of the curriculum. Leaders ensure that they accurately identify pupils' needs. They put effective support in place. Pupils with SEND who have fallen behind are catching up due to the good quality of education that they receive.

Pupils behave well in lessons most of the time. However, when teachers do not match activities to pupils' needs, some pupils become distracted.

There are many clubs and extra-curricular activities on offer. The opportunities for pupils to take part in sport are particularly impressive. Pupils can develop their skills in a wide range of sports. They can also take part in many competitions. Pupils enthusiastically told us about the school's successes in competitions against other schools. In 2018, the school was awarded the gold standard of the national School Games Mark.

Leaders have built a strong team of staff. Staff are proud to work at the school. They value the training and development leaders provide. Staff also value leaders' concern for their well-being. They told us that leaders' approach to assessment is not time consuming and ensures that pupils know how to improve.

Children in Reception get an excellent start to their education. Staff surround the children with rich learning opportunities. Children very quickly learn how to discuss their learning with confidence and sophistication. They also quickly learn the basic skills of reading and writing. Reception staff provide exceptionally well for disadvantaged children and children with SEND.

Children in Reception play and learn very well together. They support each other in their learning. Children listen to each other carefully. They also hold their concentration exceptionally well.

Staff in Reception develop productive relationships with parents. Staff and parents regularly discuss how they can work together to support the children's high-quality learning.

Governors share leaders' aim to make the school even better. Governors know what is working well and what needs to improve. They challenge leaders effectively to meet governors' high expectations. Governors ensure that disadvantaged pupils get the support they need to do well in school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All adults make safeguarding their highest priority. Leaders ensure that they use their training to keep pupils safe. Adults act swiftly and appropriately when they have concerns that a pupil is at risk of harm.

Leaders support vulnerable pupils very well. Leaders work closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils receive the support they need.

Leaders carry out the checks needed to make sure adults are suitable to work with pupils. Governors and local authority representatives check that staff keep pupils safe.

Staff are aware of local safeguarding risks. They teach pupils how to assess risks and keep themselves safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders need to plan the curriculum so that teachers understand the knowledge and skills that must be taught for subjects other than English, mathematics and science. Teachers should design activities to help pupils learn the specific knowledge and skills for these subjects.
- Leaders must ensure that all teachers in key stage 2 use leaders' chosen approach to the teaching of phonics for older pupils who find reading difficult.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	115027
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10088733
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	599
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kirsty Clarke-Howard
Headteacher	Melanie Gaskin
Website	www.westlands.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 October 2018

Information about this school

- In July 2018, the school was awarded the gold standard of the national School Games Mark.
- In July 2019, the school was awarded the Primary Science Quality Mark.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors had discussions with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), subject leaders and the leader for the early years provision. They also had discussions with members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors spoke with parents, analysed 52 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 47 free-text responses from parents, 32 responses to the staff questionnaire and 145 responses to the pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke with teachers, including newly qualified teachers, support staff and pupils.

- Inspectors took account of a wide range of information, including the school's website, development plans, information about pupils' needs, leaders' monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment and leaders' records about pupils' behaviour. Inspectors reviewed documentation regarding safeguarding.
- Inspectors visited lessons across the school and carried out scrutiny of pupils' books. Inspectors started the inspection focusing on English, mathematics, history and science. To answer questions raised on the first day of the inspection, inspectors visited lessons in other subjects on the second day of the inspection.

Inspection team

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