

Inspection of a good school: Westbury Academy

Chingford Road, Bilborough, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG8 3BT

Inspection dates:

28 and 29 September 2021

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils have strong and trusting relationships with adults. Staff know the pupils well and create a nurturing environment where pupils feel valued and appreciated. Most pupils feel safe at school and get on well with their close peers. There are few incidents of bullying.

Some pupils are courteous and respond well to instructions. They enjoy rewards for their positive conduct. However, the behaviour of some pupils, particularly older ones, is more challenging. Their lessons are quite frequently disrupted by poor behaviour and inappropriate language. Some pupils are disrespectful and too familiar when they interact with adults. These adults do not always set a good example in response.

Older pupils are proud of their achievements as part of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Other opportunities for pupils to benefit from extra-curricular activities are limited.

Most parents and carers are positive about the school. One summed up the views of others in saying, 'There is a very clear message that staff will not give up on pupils, despite their difficulties.'

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

Pupils who are at an early stage of learning to read do not get the support they need. Teachers are poorly trained. They do not have a secure knowledge of phonics or of how to teach it effectively. Their approach to teaching phonics is inconsistent. Pupils repeat errors made by teachers when pronouncing the sounds that letters make. Pupils' reading books do not closely match their phonic knowledge. They are not able to practise the sounds they know and cannot break down unfamiliar words. These pupils do not gain the knowledge and skills they need to become confident and fluent readers quickly enough.

Leaders have begun to raise the profile of reading. Pupils enjoy hearing teachers read stories aloud that match pupils' experiences and interests. Many pupils engage well, and some are keen to discuss their ideas about the texts. Some older pupils read independently each day. They choose appropriate books from the school's newly resourced library. These developments are recent. They are part of leaders' long-term plans to improve pupils' reading skills, including a new approach to the teaching of phonics.

Pupils study a broad range of subjects. Most subject curriculum plans do not identify exactly what pupils need to know, and when. Leaders do not check that plans take into account what pupils must learn, based on what they know already. This is particularly important, since many pupils join the school with gaps in their learning from their previous educational experiences. Specialist teachers in science and mathematics, for example, check pupils' knowledge and understanding carefully before moving on. Other staff do not have the subject knowledge they need to deliver the curriculum effectively.

Behaviour is inconsistent across the school. Some pupils behave sensibly and show others respect. Other pupils have struggled to settle back into routines following the pandemic. Not all staff have consistently high expectations of how pupils should behave. Too many pupils are either withdrawn from lessons or excluded from school for a short period of time because of their behaviour. Leaders do not use information about incidents of poor behaviour well enough to help them bring about improvements. Recent changes to how staff manage pupils' behaviour are having a positive impact, but it is still early days.

Leaders have recently introduced new strategies to promote pupils' wider development. Some pupils already benefit from experiences to enhance their studies, particularly in English, music and art. Older pupils enjoy working with business leaders to raise their aspirations for the future. However, plans to provide more opportunities to develop pupils' talents and interests have not been fully implemented.

Staff feel well supported, particularly by new senior leaders.

Trustees and the chief executive officer understand leaders' priorities for improvement. New trust-wide networks help leaders share best practice with other leaders in the trust. However, trustees do not hold leaders to account well enough for the quality of the school's curriculum.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspectors agreed that curriculum developments, including the reading curriculum, and pupils' behaviour may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe in school. They know how to keep themselves safe online. They learn about the risks they may face in their local communities, for example from knife crime. Leaders provide bespoke support to pupils who need it.

Staff are well trained. They know how to identify pupils at risk of neglect and the signs of harmful sexual behaviour. Staff know they must report any concerns they have about a pupil promptly, so that leaders can take appropriate action.

Leaders understand their responsibilities well. Safeguarding records are comprehensive. Leaders are supported well by the trust safeguarding leader and work closely with external agencies to keep pupils safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that pupils who are in the early stages of learning to read get the right support. The teaching of phonics is not consistent. Pupils cannot decode unfamiliar words. Their reading books do not closely match the sounds that they know. Leaders must ensure that staff get the training that they need to follow a systematic approach to phonics. They should ensure that there is a well-sequenced curriculum in place so that pupils have the chance to recall and practise the sounds that they are learning.
- Subject curriculum plans do not identify precisely the important knowledge in every subject. They are not well sequenced enough to allow pupils to build on what they learned before. Some staff do not have the specialist knowledge they need to deliver the curriculum. Pupils do not gain the subject knowledge that they could. Leaders should identify the key information that they want pupils to remember. They should ensure that the curriculum is well sequenced so that pupils can revisit and deepen their learning. They must make sure that staff are well trained to deliver the planned curriculum effectively.
- Leaders have not ensured that there is a consistent approach to managing pupils' behaviour. Staff do not have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Some staff do not model good behaviour well enough. Leaders do not analyse information about pupils' behaviour precisely enough. Some pupils do not get the support they need to improve their behaviour. They are repeatedly withdrawn from lessons or excluded. Leaders must ensure that all staff have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour and exemplify this in their own conduct. Leaders should use information about pupils' challenging behaviour more effectively to inform their actions to improve pupils' conduct.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Westbury School, to be good in November 2013.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 are the school and you are 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	144320
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	10199534
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy special converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	111
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Eileen Hartley
Principal	Lee Morgan
Website	www.westburyschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the Raleigh Learning Trust in April 2017. This is the school's first inspection since it became an academy. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The current chair of the board of trustees was appointed in September 2019. A new chief executive officer joined the trust at the same time.
- In March 2021, a local governing body was established to oversee some aspects of the school's work.
- Two new assistant principals were appointed to their roles in summer 2021. The principal and the deputy principal took up their respective posts in September 2021.
- The school provides education for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Some of these pupils have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. Almost all pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The number of pupils on the school's roll has increased significantly since the last inspection of the predecessor school in 2013.
- The school is registered to admit boys and girls. There were only boys on the school's roll at the time of this inspection.

- The school currently uses one registered alternative provider: Hospital Home Education Learning Centre. The school also uses five unregistered providers, including RISE Learning Zone, Phoenix Aspirational Learning, Crisp Vocational Provision, Heading for Goal - Notts County Foundation and The Island Project.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the principal and other senior leaders.
- The lead inspector met with safeguarding leaders to discuss safeguarding and looked at documentation relating to safeguarding, the school's system for recruiting staff and the school's single central record. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors did deep dives in three subjects: reading, mathematics and personal, social, health and economic education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' workbooks, spoke with pupils and met with teachers of the lessons visited. On the second day of the inspection, inspectors visited lessons and reviewed curriculum plans in a wider range of subjects. Inspectors spoke with some Year 3 pupils about reading and listened to them read.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from Years 9 and 11, spoke with other pupils informally and observed the behaviour of pupils during social times.
- The lead inspector met with trustees, including the chair of the board of trustees, and the chair of the local governing body. Inspectors met with other trust representatives, including the chief executive officer and the director of education.
- An inspector visited three of the unregistered alternative providers used by the school.
- Inspectors took into account the 12 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 11 free-text responses. There were no responses to the staff survey or the pupil survey.
- The inspection team reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, curriculum plans and information about pupils' attendance, behaviour and exclusions.
- During the inspection, pupils from Years 5, 6 and 8 learned remotely at home for one day. A small number of staff were absent due to issues related to COVID-19.

Inspection team

Rachel Tordoff, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Stephanie Innes-Taylor	Her Majesty's Inspector
Hazel Henson	Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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