

Inspection of Westgate Hill Primary Academy

Beaconsfield Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE4 5JN

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 October 2021

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at this highly inclusive school. Values such as being 'welcoming' and 'respectful', or 'understanding all points of view', are central to the inspirational ethos. These values shine out in every aspect of school life. One pupil summed up the views of many by saying, 'I want to go to school every day. We would be happy to come at the weekend too.'

Leaders set the highest of expectations for pupils' behaviour and learning. Pupils' behaviour is superb. They have excellent listening skills and a remarkable work ethic. The high standard of work in pupils' books is impressive.

Pupils talk zealously about their roles, including the 'mini police', 'smart council' and 'eco-committee'. Pupils take immense pride in making a positive difference to school and community life.

Pupils say adults listen to pupils if they are sad or upset. They know that staff will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour. It is sorted quickly. Pupils say bullying incidents are rare for this reason and they feel safe and protected. They are supported to be aware of risks to their safety when online.

Many parents and carers use the words 'supportive', 'approachable', 'friendly' and 'helpful' to describe the school staff. They also say that their children achieve well. One parent wrote, 'I have seen my children flourish within the school and reach their full potential.'

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

The heads of school lead with a strong moral purpose. Leaders, staff and governors share their unwavering vision for every pupil to achieve their very best. A high proportion of pupils join the school at different points throughout the year. For the majority of these pupils, English is an additional language (EAL). Leaders and staff are adept at managing this. All pupils can concentrate on their learning in lessons because behaviour for learning is impeccable.

Leaders have thought carefully about what knowledge they want pupils to learn in every curriculum subject. They have invested in high-quality professional development for all staff. This gives staff a wealth of subject-specific knowledge. Leaders understand how each subject should start within the early years framework. They ensure that curriculum plans have specific adjustments to meet pupils needs and starting points. Teachers regularly check what all pupils can remember from their previous learning. They use this information to set follow-up work at exactly the right level of challenge. This helps pupils to learn new knowledge through ambitious next steps. As a result, pupils make rapid gains in all subjects.

Children get off to a rapid start in the early years. Leaders have an exceptional understanding of the needs of young children. They adapt the learning environment indoors and outside to meet those needs. Reception activities build on what children have learned in Nursery. There is a sharp focus on developing children's communication and language skills through songs, rhymes, stories and role play.

Pupils develop their knowledge of mathematics by continually building on the facts and methods that they know and can do. They practise and apply these methods in different calculations. This helps pupils to select the correct method in problem-solving activities. They use mathematical terminology accurately.

In science, pupils apply the facts they know to learn new information. In Year 6, pupils learned how animals adapt to suit their surroundings. Pupils used their knowledge about animals from previous learning across key stage 2 to consider this. Pupils use scientific vocabulary with confidence.

Pupils in key stage 1 develop their geographical understanding of things like weather, locations and maps. Teachers use familiar places such as the school and the local area to teach this. Pupils build on this knowledge as they move through school to consider countries around the world. In Year 6, pupils could explain how climate change affects the polar region.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is at the heart of the curriculum. Leaders reviewed curriculum plans to include government guidance on relationships education. Pupils' personal development is exceptional. Leaders celebrate and respect different backgrounds, cultures and faiths. Pupils show genuine empathy to their peers who are new to the school. Pupils relish their roles as 'young translators'. They welcome and interpret for pupils with EAL when they arrive in school. This complements the 'welcome package' of specific learning provided by leaders.

Children make a fast start to learning phonics. In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop their phonics knowledge to become confident and fluent readers. Pupils in the earliest stages of reading catch up quickly. Pupils apply phonics knowledge to spell words and write at length. In key stage 2, pupils learn how to retrieve information and infer meaning from a range of texts. Pupils immerse themselves in high-quality texts and decorated reading areas such as 'under the sea' or 'in the jungle'. This inspires pupils of all ages to read for pleasure.

The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is highly experienced. She inspires confidence in staff to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers adjust the work set for these pupils without simplifying the challenging learning goal. This helps pupils with SEND to achieve highly.

The trust and the executive principal support leaders exceptionally well. This support has changed over time, as leaders at all levels have grown from strength to strength. Governors and trustees bring skills and expertise from a wide range of backgrounds. They support and challenge leaders effectively. Governors know how

well the school is performing. Staff say that both governors and leaders are mindful of their workload. Staff feel immensely valued and staff morale is high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) has established strong systems for staff to follow. She is supported by four leaders trained as deputy DSLs. Together they are tenacious in ensuring that any safeguarding concerns are taken seriously. The trust ensures that all staff and volunteers have the necessary safety checks before they start work. Staff access regular safeguarding training. They are knowledgeable about government safety guidelines. They recognise risks that pupils might face in the local area.

The welfare manager has forged strong relationships with pupils and their families. She supports pupils who are facing challenging circumstances to attend school regularly and stay safe.

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	144970
Local authority	Newcastle-upon-Tyne
Inspection number	10200750
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	708
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Susanna Kempe
Headteacher	Keeley Wood (Executive Principal)
Head of School	Karl Ellerbrook
Head of School	Nick Watson
Website	https://westgatehill.laidlawschoolstrust.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Laidlaw Schools multi-academy trust.
- The school runs a free breakfast club and educational after-school clubs on the school site.

Information about this inspection

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

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

- Inspectors met with the two heads of school, the deputy and assistant head teachers, curriculum subject leaders, the early years leader, the SENCo and the pupil premium leader. They met with staff to gather their views.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading and phonics, mathematics, science, geography and PSHE. Inspectors met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work,
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer (CEO) of The Laidlaw Schools Trust, the executive principal, the chair, vice-chair and four members of the governing body and two trustees. The lead inspector spoke to the school improvement partner on the telephone.
- Inspectors met with pupils to discuss their views about the school. Inspectors also talked to pupils in lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtime. Inspectors also considered the 2 responses to Ofsted's online pupils' survey.
- Inspectors considered a range of documents related to school improvement and self-evaluation. Inspectors reviewed behaviour logs and attendance records.
- To check on the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed a range of documentation. This included the school's single central record, safeguarding policy, staff training records and child protection logs. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader and welfare manager and spoke with pupils and staff to check how well the school keeps children safe.
- Two inspectors gathered the view of parents at the beginning of the school day. Inspectors also took account of 46 responses from Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and 16 responses to the free-text option. Inspectors also considered the views of 55 members of staff who responded to Ofsted's survey for staff.

Inspection team

Alison Aitchison, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
John Downs	Ofsted Inspector
Zoe Westley	Ofsted Inspector
David Hodgkiss	Ofsted Inspector
Alex Thorp	Her Majesty's Inspector

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