

Inspection of West Leigh Junior School

Ronald Hill Grove, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 2JB

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 November 2021

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and staff are proud to be part of the 'West Leigh Way'. Pupils have the highest expectations of themselves and others. They are exceptionally well prepared for the future.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes for learning are exemplary. Pupils show personal aspiration and determination while having empathy for others. They show maturity beyond their years. They understand that everyone has different qualities, and these qualities are equally respected.

Pupils enjoy a vast range of extra clubs and experiences alongside a highly ambitious curriculum. This prepares all pupils for the next stage of their education and the wider world. Pupils' unique talents and skills are recognised and celebrated in assemblies and performances. Pupils are encouraged to take risks and try something new to improve themselves.

Pupils say that bullying never happens. If it did occur, they know staff would quickly sort it out. Pupils feel safe in school.

Parents are very positive about the school. Typical comments include, 'the school has played a pivotal role in nurturing our children's potential' and 'the school always has the children's best interests at heart'.

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

Leaders have developed a highly ambitious and well-structured curriculum. It has been designed to be aspirational for all pupils. A strong focus on diversity prepares pupils exceptionally well for life in modern Britain. All staff are relentless in ensuring that all pupils achieve their very best. They do this by always having the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve.

Leaders ensure that staff have strong subject knowledge. They also make sure that staff understand the most effective ways for pupils to know and remember more. Staff are skilled at checking pupils' understanding. They adapt plans effectively to make sure that all pupils succeed.

Pupils develop their confidence in oracy and debate. This enables them to articulate well the knowledge they have gained and apply it across the 'connected curriculum'. Pupils provide clear explanations about their point of view.

The reading curriculum is aspirational. Staff see it as central to the whole curriculum. The few pupils who are at an earlier stage of reading are taught to improve their fluency and expression when reading aloud. These pupils have extra reading sessions to build their confidence to become better readers.

Older pupils discuss their favourite authors and talk in detail about their current and previous class texts. Pupils understand the complex language and ambitious vocabulary of Shakespeare.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained to provide effective support. Staff skilfully adapt the activities as needed. Pupils with SEND achieve exceptionally well and are ready for their next stage of learning.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are exceptional. All staff have equally high standards and pupils are clear about these. Pupils demonstrate high levels of self-control and positive attitudes. When discussing the school council's action plan, pupils were able to evaluate the successes and the areas that still need further work. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the life of the school and the community.

Leaders have a strong focus on supporting pupils' mental and physical well-being. Pupils attend a range of clubs which contribute to the high-quality education they receive. The extended school day is a hive of activity, providing pupils with extra confidence and skills. Through the exceptionally well taught personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, pupils learn about healthy relationships, personal finances and employment trends.

Trustees provide highly effective support and challenge to leaders. They hold leaders to account by checking that all pupils, regardless of ability, access a high-quality education. Trustees continually review the school's priorities to make sure that they are the right ones. Trustees are currently making sure that further positive links with the infant school make the school even better.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff are kept up to date and well trained in keeping pupils safe. Staff have a good understanding of local risks, including county lines and domestic, social and emotional abuse. This means that staff are confident to talk about these issues with pupils if they need to.

Staff know how and when to report concerns to the safeguarding team. Leaders keep detailed safeguarding records and act promptly. They work with and challenge external agencies to ensure that families get the support they need.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe online. Older pupils know about the risks of sexual abuse when using social media. Staff create an open culture for pupils to discuss any concerns.

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	142753
Local authority	Southend-on-Sea
Inspection number	10199310
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	515
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Bob Hellen
Executive headteacher	Cheryl Woolf
Website	www.westleighjunior.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- West Leigh Junior School converted to become an academy school in April 2016. When its predecessor school, West Leigh Junior School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the assistant headteachers and the special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors also spoke to the director of learning and teaching from the trust, two trustees and the director of education from Southend local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, PSHE, languages and design technology. For each deep dive, inspectors met with

subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about religious education (RE), music, history and geography as part of the school's 'connected curriculum'. Inspectors visited swimming, RE and music lessons. They also visited choir practice and an assembly on protected characteristics.
- Inspectors spoke to a sample of parents. They spoke to pupils in the breakfast club and on the playground. Inspectors visited the neighbouring infant school's hall where the pupils have their cooked lunch.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the school's single central register, considered its safeguarding policy and spoke to staff and pupils. Inspectors looked at case files and a range of safeguarding records with the designated safeguarding leaders.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of school information, including the school's website, leaders' improvement plans and trustee board and committee meeting minutes.
- Inspectors considered 123 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, from this academic year, and 64 free-text responses submitted during the inspection. Inspectors reviewed 49 responses to the online staff survey and 30 responses to the online pupil survey.

Inspection team

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