

Inspection of a good school: West Meadows Primary School

West Street, Hoyland, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S74 9ET

Inspection dates:

10 and 11 November 2021

Outcome

West Meadows Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

West Meadows Primary is a friendly school where pupils feel safe and well cared for. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. This is characterised by a deep mutual respect between pupils and adults. Pupils understand the school's clear rules and follow these well. When the inspector spoke with pupils, they talked confidently about bullying and were clear that there is no place for it in their school.

Leaders are determined to broaden the horizons of all pupils. They have three key priorities: enabling possibilities, valuing diversity and building rich vocabulary and language. All adults work together to ensure that each pupil reaches their potential. Equally, pupils work hard to realise the words of their school song: 'aim high to succeed and be happy and achieve'.

There is an extensive range of activities on offer. Pupils enjoy after-school clubs where they can participate in sporting activities, such as golf or boccia. Year 6 pupils enjoyed a recent residential trip to Conover Hall activity centre in Shrewsbury. They talked with animation about this trip, saying how it had developed their resilience and independence.

Pupils and their parents feel a great sense of community and belonging within the school. One parent told inspectors that staff 'go above and beyond to make sure children are safe and happy'. Another parent said, 'I would recommend this school to anyone, knowing that their child will get an amazing educational journey.'

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

Pupils' early reading is developed well. Leaders have recently introduced a new approach to the teaching of phonics. This is ensuring that all children get off to a strong start. They learn new sounds as soon as they arrive in the school's nursery. This equips them well for when they enter Reception Year. More complex sounds are then introduced in a logical order. Children are motivated by the comprehensively trained and committed adults who support their reading journey. Pupils attentively participate in interesting and fun

activities. Staff carefully select reading books to ensure that children and pupils can practise the sounds that they learn in class. Leaders invite parents and carers to informative reading workshops which help pupils build their reading skills further at home.

Leaders have carefully considered the structure and content of the curriculum. Teachers' plans for subjects such as mathematics, science and history identify the important knowledge and skills that pupils should retain. Content is taught in a logical order. Teachers creatively check what pupils know at the start of each lesson. They then use 'exit tickets' to enable pupils to reflect on their learning. This information is then used to plan future learning. Each lesson is purposeful, and pupils build knowledge effectively through well-designed lessons. In mathematics, leaders acknowledge that improvements need to be made to ensure that the curriculum is ambitious for all pupils.

Pupils demonstrate their knowledge at the end of each unit through carefully considered assessment pieces. For example, in history, pupils show what they know and remember about 'Traders and Raiders'. They do this by considering what a day in the life of a Viking warrior might look like. Leaders have identified that pupils are not always sure which subject they are learning. This is because learning in subjects such as history and geography is termed as 'topic'; it is not subject specific. Leaders intend to clearly define this learning so that pupils will know when they are being historians or geographers.

From an early age, children become confident learners. Quickly, they learn to concentrate well. Pupils in the school's foundation stage focus independently on tasks. They are inspired by the conversations they hold with the talented adults in this unit. Children interacted with great interest when the inspector joined their explorative play using a range of containers in the 'sea creature' themed water tray.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities get the help that they need. Staff are sensitive, caring and want the best for every pupil.

The local governing body and leaders from the multi-academy trust support the school well. Staff welcome the training they have received. Effective teamwork between staff is a strength of the school. Adults communicate well with each other. They are consistent in their approach. They are happy to work flexibly to best meet the needs of pupils in their care. They praise the headteacher for her care in assuring their well-being.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspector agreed that developing consistency in the delivery of mathematics to achieve ambitious end points and the development of the wider curriculum may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding within the school. The experienced well-being and safeguarding team ensure that staff are well trained in all aspects of keeping children safe. All staff know what to do when they have a concern about a pupil. The designated safeguarding leads are effective in pursuing concerns and in ensuring that pupils receive

the help they need. Staff understand the importance of promoting pupils' well-being and mental health, and this is comprehensively taught within the school's curriculum.

Pupils told the inspector that they feel safe. Pupils have a good understanding of how to spot potential dangers and stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils are not always clear about the disciplinary subjects being studied. This then hinders pupils' developing knowledge and skills in specific areas, such as history or geography.
- Curriculum planning is not ambitious enough in mathematics. Some pupils say that they want mathematics to be harder. Some pupils do not achieve as well as they should in mathematics. Leaders should ensure that curriculum plans are ambitious and that teachers have the knowledge and ability to deliver these plans effectively.

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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, West Meadows Primary School, to be good in January 2011.

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	140460
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10200161
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	235
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sharon Cook
Headteacher	Rebecca Marsh
Website	www.westmeadows.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 October 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is a member of St Mary's Academy Trust.
- The headteacher took up her role in September 2021.
- This school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and history. In each subject, the inspector met with subject leaders, visited lessons, talked to pupils and teachers and looked at pupils' work. In reading, the inspector also listened to pupils read to familiar adults.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the pastoral team, subject leaders, groups of teachers and support staff, the chair and members of the local governing body.

- The inspector met with the chief executive officer, the deputy chief executive officer and the chair of the trust board of St. Mary's Academy Trust.
- The inspector reviewed safeguarding records, including the central record of recruitment checks on staff.
- The inspector considered the views of parents who responded to Ofsted's parents' questionnaire, Parent View.
- The inspector considered the views of staff from conversations and took account of the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff.
- The inspector spoke with pupils formally and informally about their day-to-day experiences at the school. The responses from pupils who completed Ofsted's pupils' survey were considered.

Inspection team

Marcus Newby, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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