

Inspection of West Moors Middle School

Heathfield Way, West Moors, Ferndown, Dorset BH22 0DA

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 February 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Good
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What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have high aspirations. Their vision is that all pupils will be 'the best that they can be'. Pupils rise to this challenge. Leaders and staff help pupils to feel safe and have respectful relationships. Pupils thrive at school. Staff are keen for pupils to express their thoughts. One pupil summed up the views of many by saying, 'The school really supports people being themselves.'

There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their interests and skills. Pupils enjoy the range of school clubs on offer. They particularly enjoy the opportunities to learn outdoors. Older pupils contribute to school life by being digital leaders, librarians and prefects.

School reward systems and sanctions motivate pupils to behave well and to work hard. Pupils and staff agree that poor behaviour is rare. Pupils say that the school is a 'Telling School', meaning that staff encourage them to share any worries they have in a way that suits them. Pupils feel safe at school. They trust adults to help resolve any difficulties, including any rare incidents of bullying.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. It is clear what pupils need to learn and when. This means that pupils successfully develop their knowledge well over time. Where pupils have gaps in their knowledge, leaders have made well-thought-out adjustments to the curriculum. However, in some subjects, the curriculum is not as well developed as it could be.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive effective support. Staff know pupils well and skilfully adapt the curriculum to meet their needs. These pupils achieve well.

The school promotes reading well. Pupils enjoy the books that they read and feel motivated to read. A new phonics scheme is helping those pupils who are not fluent readers to catch up quickly.

Learning builds on what pupils already know. This means that pupils are ready for their next steps in learning. Support given to those who need it ensures that they progress well through the curriculum. Assessment systems clearly identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. In most subjects, these gaps close rapidly. Pupils who have fallen behind receive well-thought-out support to help them to catch up. Most teaching is built on strong subject knowledge and teachers explain new learning clearly. Where this is occasionally not the case, pupils' learning is not as secure.

There are efficient routines in place that promote calm and orderly conduct. A culture of valuing and respecting each other leads to strong relationships between

staff and pupils. Pupils behave well and value the reward system. They say that sanctions are rarely used, as most pupils behave well in class and at playtimes.

Careers education helps pupils to understand the world of work. Pupils say that they value events such as workshops and the information they receive about apprenticeships. The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Governors know the school well. They provide appropriate support and challenge to school leaders.

Leaders have taken action to support further pupils' broader development. For example, they have introduced extra sessions to support pupils' well-being. Pupils know about healthy relationships and how to take care of their bodies. An increasing number of pupils attend the variety of clubs that are available to them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know how to identify concerns and are clear about how to report them. They have confidence that leaders will take action if needed. Leaders work well with other agencies and challenge other professionals appropriately if they feel it is in a pupil's best interests. Pupils who are at most risk are well supported by staff. Leaders monitor such pupils closely and intervene swiftly when necessary. Pupils learn how to stay safe online and in a variety of situations.

Leaders ensure that appropriate background checks are carried out on all adults working in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some areas of the curriculum are at an early stage of development. This means that pupils do not progress as well in some subjects as they could. Leaders need to continue the work they have begun in strengthening the curriculum, so that pupils gain sufficient knowledge in all subjects.
- Some teaching is not based on strong enough subject knowledge. This can mean that learning is not explained clearly, so pupils do not learn as much as they could. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the subject knowledge they need.

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	113861
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10201004
Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	9 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Derek Brooks
Headteacher	Deborah Craddock
Website	www.westmoorsmid.dorset.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- West Moors Middle School is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The school has a specialist resource base for pupils with complex communication needs.
- The school uses two alternative provisions.

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 had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, governors and a representative of Dorset local authority and the headteacher from a feeder school.

- Meetings were held with curriculum leaders, teachers and the special educational needs coordinator.
- An inspector contacted the alternative provision used by the school.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leads, examined school records and discussed safeguarding cases.
- Inspectors completed deep dives in the following subjects: mathematics, English, history and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the views of staff in Ofsted's online survey. No pupils responded to Ofsted's online survey. Inspectors spoke to pupils to gain their views.
- An inspector visited the complex communication needs resource base that is part of the school.

Inspection team

Sarah Favager-Dalton, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Stephen McShane	Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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