

Inspection of a good school: Westlea Primary School

Langstone Way, Westlea Down, Swindon, Wiltshire SN5 7BT

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 March 2022

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 are proud of this nurturing and inclusive school. They are happy and attend well. Pupils learn the importance of kindness and responsibility. For example, they raise funds for many charities and take part in events to help the local community. Older pupils enjoy helping their peers by becoming prefects and anti-bullying ambassadors.

Pupils try their best in lessons. However, they do not achieve as well as they should in some subjects. Teachers do not address gaps in pupils' knowledge quickly enough. Pupils sometimes do not remember enough important knowledge across the curriculum.

Staff model the school's values well. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and respectful. Pupils want to live up to adults' high expectations of behaviour. They are well mannered and polite. Routines such as 'wonderful walking' help everyone to behave well. Incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils feel safe and have confidence in staff to look after them.

Pupils learn about diversity throughout the curriculum. They show respect and empathy for other beliefs and cultures. Pupils learn how to keep their minds and bodies healthy. They speak maturely about how the school 'helps us to be better people'.

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

Leaders have developed a broad and ambitious curriculum, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They have improved how teachers deliver the curriculum in phonics and mathematics. However, leaders recognise that there is still more work to do to make sure that pupils learn the curriculum well in all subjects. Some subject leaders are new to their roles. There have been delays to subject leaders'

work, some of which is due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders have not been able to make sure that all teachers implement the curriculum well enough.

Leaders make reading a priority. Story times are a valued part of the school day in every class. Leaders have introduced a new phonics programme. Staff are well trained and have a secure knowledge of the programme. They use careful checks to make sure pupils who are falling behind get extra help. Support to catch up in phonics is strong. Reading books closely match the sounds pupils are learning. However, the reading curriculum for older pupils is not as well planned. Pupils do not always learn new vocabulary well enough. This hinders some pupils' understanding of what they read.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make a strong start. Staff use their assessments of children's knowledge to plan exactly what they need to learn. Children with SEND receive precise support. Leaders have provided helpful staff development so that speaking and listening and early mathematics are implemented well. Children practise new language when playing. They learn to love reading by joining in with a wide range of stories, rhymes and songs.

Leaders include pupils with SEND in the life of the school. Staff know pupils' needs well. Leaders work well with parents, carers and a range of professionals. Occasionally however, the adaptations for some pupils with SEND are not well thought out in some subjects, which hinders their learning.

Pupils successfully build on their previous learning in mathematics. Teachers show pupils how to apply prior knowledge to solve problems. Teachers use questioning precisely to make sure pupils understand key concepts. However, assessment is not used well in some other areas of the curriculum. For example, in science teachers do not spot pupils' misconceptions quickly enough. They do not check that pupils have remembered their previous learning securely before moving on. As a result, pupils, including those with SEND, have gaps in their knowledge.

Pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. Pupils enjoy a wide range of school clubs and look forward to going on school trips again later in the year. Leaders have plans to introduce an even wider range of enrichments, such as the 'junior citizen' award. Pupils develop a good understanding of how to stay safe and learn about healthy relationships. They learn to value people of all backgrounds equally.

Pupils behave well. Everyone follows the school's clear rules and expectations. The school's emotional literacy support assistants provide strong support for pupils' well-being. Disruption in lessons is rare.

Staff say that leaders support them well. They appreciate leaders' efforts to reduce their workload. Governors understand their responsibilities. They provide appropriate challenge to leaders.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspector agreed that improving the reading curriculum, improving teachers' use of assessment and subject leadership may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know pupils and their families well. Leaders work with a range of agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils receive the right support. They make sure that all staff have regular training to recognise risks. There are clear procedures for reporting any concerns about the welfare of pupils. All staff follow these procedures. Leaders keep careful records and review all reported concerns swiftly.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. They know about the potential risks that they may face online and the dangers of drug abuse.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Older pupils do not benefit from a systematic approach to developing their reading comprehension. Teachers do not always make sure pupils have secured the knowledge they need to deepen their understanding of texts. This limits the progress that some pupils make. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum enables all pupils to improve their reading.
- In some foundation subjects, teachers do not use assessment well enough to check that pupils understand and recall what they have been taught. This prevents pupils, including those with SEND, from building their knowledge securely. Leaders should ensure that all teachers use assessment effectively to address misconceptions and check that prior learning is secure.
- In some subjects, teachers do not implement the curriculum well enough. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they should and have gaps in their knowledge. Senior leaders and subject leaders should ensure that teachers are supported effectively to deliver the intended curriculum well so that pupils know and remember more over time.

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, Westlea Primary School, to be good in July 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	140302
Local authority	Swindon
Inspection number	10210984
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	284
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Nigel Green
Headteacher	Sarah Sumner
Website	www.westleapprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 October 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current headteacher took up post in January 2020.
- The school has an eight-place resource base for pupils from Reception to Year 6 with physical disabilities.
- The school is part of Westlea Primary School, a single academy trust.
- The 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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector observed some pupils reading to a familiar adult.

- The inspector spoke with pupils and leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The inspector met with school leaders, including the headteacher, the special educational needs and disability coordinator, the early years leader, curriculum leaders, and teaching and support staff.
- The inspector reviewed documentation and spoke with leaders, staff and pupils to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding. The inspector reviewed attendance records and the school's behaviour and bullying records.
- The inspector met with governors and trustees, and with representatives of a trust providing support and advice to school leaders.
- The inspector considered nine responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. The inspector also took into consideration the 39 responses to the staff survey and 49 pupil survey responses.

Inspection team

Claire Mirams, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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