

Inspection of Weston Junior Academy

Princess Drive, Weston Coyney, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST3 6NG

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 April 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school. They enjoy learning and are keen to do well. The curriculum is planned effectively in all subjects, so pupils' learning builds well from year to year. Pupils particularly enjoy reading because of the emphasis that staff place on it. The school's corridors have attractive displays about books that capture pupils' imagination.

The school's values run through everything that happens at Weston Junior Academy. Pupils know and understand them. For example, pupils understand why it is so important to have 'empathy and respect' for other people, especially those who are different from themselves.

Pupils behave well in lessons and at other times of the day. They are polite, respectful and courteous. They trust staff to support them if they have any problems. For example, they know that bullying is not tolerated and that any that does happen will be dealt with well. Pupils feel safe and are safe in school.

The principal, leaders, staff and governors form a committed and united team. Together, they have brought about considerable improvement to all aspects of the school over recent years. Pupils now benefit from a good standard of education.

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

The principal and senior leaders provide clear, strategic leadership. They carefully choose improvement actions based on evidence-based research. As a result, the school has improved considerably over recent years. Governors provide effective support and challenge to leaders. Trustees and trust staff have also played a full part in the school's improvement.

Leaders, supported by the trust, have made the development of staff a key priority. They have targeted training well. For example, all subjects are now led by enthusiastic subject experts. Subject leaders have clearly set out what they want pupils to learn and remember in each of their subjects.

Leaders' work to prioritise reading has proved very successful. Most pupils are enthusiastic readers. Staff have carefully chosen the books that pupils read in class. These texts engage and interest pupils. The well-stocked library is popular. Pupils talk about their favourite authors and genres. Leaders have also taken deliberate steps to widen pupils' vocabulary. This has also proved successful. Pupils who find reading difficult are supported well. Staff provide regular, personalised support. These pupils make good progress towards becoming fluent readers.

Mathematics is taught well throughout the school. The curriculum is appropriately sequenced, and teachers explain new content skilfully. Pupils develop good basic skills. They also learn to reason and explain their thinking when solving problems.

Leaders have sensibly prioritised some subjects when putting their revised curriculum into practice. Initially, prioritised subjects were English, mathematics, science and computing. Religious education (RE) has recently been added to this list. The curriculum is delivered well in all these subjects.

Leaders have plans in place to fully develop all other subjects later this year. Some of these are delivered less effectively now. Teachers have less expertise and confidence in some foundation subjects. Consequently, they do not assess pupils' learning as well as they do in other subjects. For example, they do not always identify and then address pupils' errors and misconceptions.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Their needs are quickly identified, and appropriate support is put in place. For example, teaching assistants provide skilful support for pupils in lessons. Pupils with SEND make good progress.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Most attend very regularly. They demonstrate strong attitudes to learning. Behaviour has improved over recent years. Sanctions, such as suspension, are now used very rarely.

The school's work to promote pupils' wider development is effective. Some aspects are very strong. The development of pupils' spirituality and morality is highly effective. The RE curriculum plays an important part in this, as does the broader curriculum and the school's values that are lived out each day.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has a strong culture of ensuring that pupils are safe and well cared for. Regular and effective training means that staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities. They are alert to the signs that pupils might need extra help. They pass concerns to leaders, who deal with these appropriately. Leaders ensure that pupils get the right support, making appropriate use of outside agencies.

Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe and well looked after in school. Staff and parents and carers who spoke with inspectors concurred.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The implementation of the curriculum in some foundation subjects is less effective than in others. Staff have less expertise and confidence in these subjects. Consequently, they do not use assessment well. They do not always identify and address pupils' misconceptions as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that all subjects are delivered to a consistently high standard.

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	143356
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10212340
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	225
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Johnny Anderson
Principal	Julie Birchall
Website	www.westonfederation.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Weston Junior Academy converted to become an academy school in November 2017. At this time, it joined the St Bart's Multi-Academy Trust. When its predecessor school, Weston Coyney Junior School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement.
- The principal took up her post on 1 September 2019.
- The school does not make any use of alternative providers.

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 principal and other senior leaders. They met with members of the local governing committee and the board of trustees, including

the chairs of both groups. They also met with the chief executive officer (CEO) and the deputy CEO of St Bart's Multi-Academy Trust.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and RE. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum 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.
- Inspectors considered safeguarding by meeting with the principal, who is also the designated safeguarding lead. They scrutinised policies and records relating to child protection and examined the safeguarding checks made on staff before they join the school.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about their reading.
- Inspectors spoke with several members of staff. They considered the responses from staff to Ofsted's online inspection questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke informally with pupils at breaktime and lunchtime. They also observed the school at these times.
- An inspector visited an assembly.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the day and considered the responses, including written responses, to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Alun Williams, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Rob Bourdon-Pierre

Ofsted Inspector

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