

Inspection of a good school: Westbrook Old Hall Primary School

Old Hall Road, Old Hall, Warrington, Cheshire WA5 9QA

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 May 2022

Outcome

Westbrook Old Hall Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school each day. They are polite and courteous to staff and to each other. In lessons, pupils try hard. Pupils rise to the high expectations that leaders have of their learning. Pupils relish earning 'Westies' and certificates for their achievements and positive behaviours.

In lessons and at playtimes, most pupils play and work in harmony with their friends. That said, sometimes they argue and fall out. Pupils explained that adults listen to their worries and concerns. They said that adults make sure that any bullying or poor behaviour is not tolerated. Leaders deal with any incidents of bullying quickly and fairly so that it does not reoccur. This supports pupils to feel safe in school.

Staying fit and healthy is a big part of the school day. Many pupils compete for the school in a myriad of sporting events. Most recently, pupils have enjoyed success in football. Pupils take part in a wide range of after-school clubs. As well as sporting activities, leaders offer clubs such as choir, orchestra and drama so that pupils can develop and extend their artistic talents and skills.

Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. Pupils leave Year 6 well prepared to embrace the high school curriculum.

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

Leaders have designed an interesting, challenging and ambitious curriculum. They have considered the important knowledge that they want pupils to learn in each year group. Leaders have identified the most appropriate order for pupils to learn new knowledge. The curriculum successfully builds on the skills and knowledge that children acquire in the early years. Overall, children in the early years and pupils in key stages 1 and 2 deepen their knowledge of subjects as a result of an effective curriculum.

Governors are supportive of school leaders. They challenge leaders to ensure that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, get a good deal. They are successful in making this happen. Governors ensure that staff have the skills required to identify the needs of pupils with SEND quickly. Pupils with SEND get the right help that they need, and in a timely manner. As a result, these pupils access the same high-quality curriculum as their classmates and they learn well.

In most subjects, teachers prepare new learning so that it builds on what pupils already know and can do. Where this is the case, pupils consolidate their learning well. For example, in mathematics, teachers skilfully support pupils to make connections with what they have learned previously. Teachers use assessment strategies well to address pupils' misconceptions in these subjects.

In a very small number of subjects, however, this is not the case. In these subjects, some teachers do not routinely use assessment strategies effectively enough to enable pupils to build on prior learning. On occasions, teachers' checks on what pupils can remember are limited to pupils' most recent learning. Some teachers do not enable pupils to recap learning from previous years. As a result, a few pupils struggle to make connections between curriculum content. This occasionally hinders pupils from achieving as highly as they could.

Leaders continue to make reading a whole-school priority. Staff benefit from high-quality training and they deliver the phonics curriculum confidently. Children in the early years, and pupils in key stage 1, learn new sounds in a logical order. Teachers make sure that the books that pupils take home precisely match the sounds that they have learned in class. This supports pupils to develop their confidence in reading. Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 who fall behind with their reading and phonics receive extra support to help them to catch up quickly with their classmates. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils read with high levels of accuracy and fluency.

Children in the early years and pupils in key stages 1 and 2 behave well in lessons. They get on with their work with little fuss. They try their best to be resilient and they are determined to do well.

Pupils benefit from a rich set of opportunities that go beyond the taught curriculum. They learn about other faiths and cultures. They learn about democracy and tolerance in society. Leaders plan school trips and residential visits to deepen pupils' learning. Recently, the elected school council, in consultation with senior leaders, established a space for any pupils who want some quiet, reflective time at lunchtime.

Staff said that leaders have taken positive steps to be mindful of their workload and well-being. All staff benefit from extensive training to develop their expertise in the areas where they work.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that safeguarding is a priority in the school. Staff are well trained so that they have the essential skills that they need to spot potential signs of neglect or harm in pupils.

Leaders keep meticulous records of their work to safeguard pupils. Leaders work with partner schools and external agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families receive appropriate help. Leaders provide effective support and challenge to ensure that pupils attend school regularly.

Across the curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn how to stay safe when they are crossing busy roads. They learn about the potential dangers that they may face when online or while using social media.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a very small number of subjects, the checks that teachers make on pupils' learning do not give teachers all the information that they need. This means that, from time to time, teachers do not identify gaps in some pupils' knowledge from previous years. Pupils do not always have the opportunity to make connections with what they have previously learned. Those who oversee these subjects should make sure that teachers use effective assessment systems to check what pupils know and remember. This is so that teachers can design suitable next steps in pupils' learning and address any misconceptions.

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 first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Westbrook Old Hall Primary School, to be good in May 2013.

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	145389
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	10226055
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	360
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Gavin Brown
Acting headteacher	Mary Lythall-Brennan
Website	www.westbrookoldhall.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	8 and 9 May 2013

Information about this school

- Westbrook Old Hall Primary School converted to become an academy school in January 2018. When its predecessor school, Westbrook Old Hall Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken this into account in his evaluation of the school.
- During this inspection, the inspector met with the acting headteacher and several members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspector met with the chair of the board of trustees, the multi-academy trust's chief executive officer, the director of school improvement and the trust's safeguarding leader. The inspector also met with two members of the local governing board, including the chair of governors.

- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. He considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspector spoke with parents and carers before school to gather their opinions of the school.
- The inspector spoke with a range of staff to gather their opinions about their workload and well-being.
- The inspector scrutinised a wide range of safeguarding documentation, including checks to ensure the safer recruitment of staff. The inspector checked records of staff safeguarding training. He spoke with members of staff about their safeguarding training and checked on how well they understood their safeguarding duties.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at playtimes and in the dining hall. He spoke with a range of pupils to gather their views about behaviour and safeguarding in their school. The inspector observed children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 read to trusted adults.
- The inspector carried out deep dives into early reading, mathematics and geography. He met with those who lead subjects, met with other teachers and visited lessons in each key stage. The inspector spoke with pupils and looked at examples of their work. The inspector considered how leaders organise and design the wider curriculum.

Inspection team

John Donald, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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