

# Inspection of a good school: The Westgate School

Cheriton Road, Winchester, Hampshire SO22 5AZ

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Inspection dates:

21 and 22 September 2022

## **Outcome**

The Westgate School continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

The Westgate School is a happy and vibrant community, where pupils are encouraged to aim for excellence. Pupils enjoy and benefit from opportunities to work together, for example by reading with younger pupils or helping to lead a club. They talk enthusiastically about their school and the part they play in its success.

Pupils understand and value the importance of equality and treating everyone with kindness. They appreciate the fact that the school is an inclusive community, where they can be themselves without being judged by others. Pupils feel reassured that even though bullying is very rare, leaders speak to them about it and make clear it is not tolerated.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils to develop personally as well as academically. One parent summed this up: 'My children are extremely happy at Westgate. There is a strong focus on well-being and happiness but also an expectation of high achievement.' Pupils benefit from the very broad and varied offer of extra-curricular activities. Participation is extremely high across both primary and secondary phases. Some pupils are particularly proud to take on pupil council roles and make meaningful contributions to the development of the school and its wider community.

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

Since becoming an all-through school, leaders have demonstrated determination and vision in developing a curriculum that runs from early years to key stage 4. They are highly ambitious about what they intend pupils to learn and have gone beyond the demands of the National Curriculum. They have made the most of the benefits offered by being an all-through school wherever possible. For example, they use their specialist science teachers and facilities to ensure that pupils in the primary phase make an excellent start in this subject.

The curriculum is delivered consistently well. Pupils achieve very highly regardless of their starting points. Leaders identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and consider what each individual needs to be successful. They recognise that having SEND is not an indication of low academic ability. One pupil with SEND told us: 'Since the school have identified my needs it feels like all the barriers have been removed and I can focus on achieving my best.'

Reading is highly prioritised in the school. This begins immediately in the early years, where pupils follow a well-planned and delivered phonics programme. The focus on reading continues all the way through to key stage 4, where most pupils remain enthusiastic readers. The vast majority talk keenly about the books that they are reading, either for pleasure or as part of the English curriculum. Sharp and timely assessment is used to identify those pupils who struggle with reading and pinpoint the precise areas they find challenging. This applies to pupils in both primary and secondary phases and enables leaders to put in place highly effective intervention.

Behaviour in the school is routinely very impressive. Pupils have highly positive attitudes to learning. On rare occasions where they lose focus, this is addressed quickly and effectively by teachers. When a pupil needs help to manage their behaviour, leaders and teachers discuss how they can best support them. This work is highly successful and usually results in rapid improvements.

Pupils' personal development is exceptionally strong at this school. Leaders have put together a curriculum for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) that is broad, relevant and ambitious. Teachers are trained, so that they have the expert knowledge they need to deliver this well. As a result, these lessons are memorable for pupils and have a positive influence on how they understand the world and make decisions. Careers education is also extremely successful and results in virtually all pupils leaving school with a clear and appropriate plan for their next steps.

Leadership in the school is highly strategic. Leaders at all levels use the information they gather about the school to make sure they focus on those things that will benefit pupils most. Governors share leaders' understanding of the school and their vision for success. They work closely with leaders to help them achieve this, also providing challenge where necessary.

Staff well-being is high on leaders' list of priorities. Although staff recognise that schools are busy places, they appreciate that leaders think about their workload carefully when introducing new ideas. Teachers feel valued because leaders invest in their professional development whether they are new to teaching or more experienced.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff are well trained to identify concerns and report these using the school's child protection procedures. They do this routinely because they understand the importance of passing on all concerns, even if they

seem minor. Leaders act quickly and appropriately to put support in place for pupils. They work proactively with safeguarding partners, such as the local authority and police service. Leaders perform the necessary checks on new staff and keep robust records on adults in school. Through their PSHE curriculum, pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

## 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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2016.

## 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.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	116407
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200485
<b>Type of school</b>	All-through
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1621
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Penelope Catchpole
<b>Headteacher</b>	Fae Dean
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.westgate.hants.sch.uk">www.westgate.hants.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 and 14 December 2016

## Information about this school

- The school shares its site with a separate nursery provision which takes pupils from age three months.
- The school currently sends pupils to three alternative providers, one of which is unregistered.
- Since becoming an all-through school, the school has been adding year groups each September. There are now pupils in all primary phase year groups and the first two cohorts of primary pupils have transitioned to the secondary phase.
- 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.

## Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school 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 held meetings with a range of leaders, including the headteacher and members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, mathematics, science and physical education. 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 spoke with leaders about the curriculum and looked at curriculum plans for a number of other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with governors and the local authority about their involvement in the school.
- Inspectors considered survey responses from parents, pupils and staff. They spoke to some parents in person on the school gate.
- Inspectors judged the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding procedures by meeting with leaders, scrutinising the single central record, sampling safeguarding records and talking with pupils, teachers, non-teaching staff and leaders about this aspect of their work.

### **Inspection team**

Chris Ellison, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

Ginny Rhodes

Ofsted Inspector

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