

Inspection of West Horndon Primary School

Thorndon Avenue, West Horndon, Brentwood, Essex CM13 3TR

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils describe West Horndon as being a big family. Staff know pupils well. Pupils are proud to be part of such a welcoming school.

Leaders have high aspirations for all pupils. Pupils rise to meet these expectations. All staff share this vision. Leaders make sure pupils have a wide set of experiences. These help pupils develop into confident individuals. Pupils develop their self-esteem through extra responsibilities. For example, pupils take part in class councils and the school parliament. These help pupils understand democracy.

Pupils make friends from the moment they start school. They are confident that every member of staff will help them if they have a worry. They know how to keep themselves safe, including online. Pupils know what bullying is and say it rarely happens. If it does, they know staff will deal with it.

Pupils enjoy their learning. The curriculum helps them develop their curiosity. They know they will get help if they are stuck. Pupils are well behaved and polite to each other. They welcome visitors into the school. They invite elderly members of the community into the school for afternoon tea and enjoy talking to them.

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

Leaders have developed an inspirational curriculum that is designed to meet the needs of pupils at West Horndon. They have embellished this with purposeful additional activities which are closely linked to pupils' learning and personal development. Pupils love these experiences and talk about them with great enthusiasm. A recent visit to the Tower of London brought pupils' history learning to life.

The curriculum is well designed. Leaders have considered what they want pupils to know and remember. Themes run through subjects which help pupils make connections with their prior knowledge. These themes start in the early years and continue year on year. For example, pupils understand monarchy and know about different kings and queens through time. Pupils describe similarities and differences between these monarchs. They recall their knowledge well and draw on their learning from previous years.

Teachers generally use assessment in lessons well to check pupils' learning. On a few occasions, pupils' mistakes are not identified. Some pupils continue to make these errors in their work because they are not picked up quickly enough.

Leaders prioritise reading. They want pupils to develop a love of books. The whole school environment is a celebration of language and vocabulary. Reading areas are well stocked with a wide range of books celebrating diversity. Pupils enjoy reading and talking about their books.

Adults teach phonics well. Phonics teaching starts when children join Reception. In most cases, pupils read books matched to their phonics knowledge. A small number of pupils in the early stages of learning to read do not receive the precise support they need to help them become fluent readers. This slows down their progress and achievement.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of extra activities. These are carefully designed to support pupils' wider development. For example, older pupils take part in radio broadcasts. Pupils plan and write their own content for these broadcasts. Pupils benefit from extra activities available at lunchtime and through after-school clubs.

All staff value the professional development opportunities available to them. They know that this helps them improve their teaching of the curriculum. Leaders consider staff's workload and well-being. Staff enjoy working at the school and feel supported by leaders. Some subject leaders are new. They have not yet carried out activities that tell them how well teachers teach the ambitious curriculum.

Pupils are well behaved in lessons and around school. They know the school rules. Pupils do not disrupt lessons. Pupils always do their best and want to make their teachers proud of what they can achieve.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified quickly and receive appropriate support. This is well matched to their specific needs. Staff adapt activities to ensure these pupils learn well.

The early years provide children with a solid start to their time in school. Adults design activities both inside and outside the classroom to support children's learning. Children know the school's routines and expectations. They include other children in activities they are doing and are kind towards each other.

Governors know the strengths of the school well. They make regular visits to ensure they know what is going on and check for themselves what leaders tell them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise safeguarding. All staff know how to identify and record concerns. They understand their role in keeping children safe. Leaders follow up on concerns to make sure pupils get the support they need. This includes help from external agencies where appropriate. Staff training is up to date and weekly briefings keep staff informed of changes. Safer recruitment procedures ensure checks take place before new staff join the school. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. Governors know the important role they play in safeguarding. They carefully review leaders' processes and practices to make sure they do all they should to keep pupils safe.

Leaders resolved a small number of queries which arose during the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all staff have the knowledge they need to support pupils who are in the early stages of learning to read. Sometimes, staff encourage strategies that do not help pupils to develop fluency and phonics knowledge. As a result, some pupils do not learn to read as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that all staff receive training to enable them to provide high-quality support for pupils who fall behind with their reading.
- Some subject leaders are new to the post and have not yet undertaken monitoring activities to ensure the curriculum is being effectively delivered. Senior leaders should ensure that they continue to provide the necessary support for new leaders.

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

Unique reference number	114921
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10241618
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	157
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Richard Kurzyca
Headteacher	Matthew O'Grady
Website	www.westhorndon.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 December 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for 20 pupils with speech and language disorders.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 leaders, staff, pupils and two governors about the school's provision. The lead inspector also met with two representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into reading, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at

curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read.

- Inspectors scrutinised a range of other documents, including school improvement plans, records of full governing body meetings and information on the school's website.
- The lead inspector reviewed a range of documents to evaluate safeguarding and leaders' approach to safer recruitment. The lead inspector spoke with the designated safeguarding lead. Inspectors also spoke to staff to explore their understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Inspectors gathered the views of pupils when talking to them in groups.
- Inspectors considered the responses and free-text comments to Ofsted's questionnaire for parents, along with responses to Ofsted's questionnaires for staff and pupils. The lead inspector also spoke with a number of parents at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Lisa Massey, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Nicola Shadbolt

Ofsted Inspector

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