

# Inspection of a good school: Westbridge Academy

Bolingbroke Walk, Westbridge Road, London SW11 3NE

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Inspection dates:

24 and 25 November 2022

## Outcome

Westbridge Academy continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils in this school are friendly and welcoming. They are happy and safe. Pupils have trusted adults who come to their aid if they have any concerns or worries. Staff and pupils are caring towards each other and, together, create a strong sense of community in the school.

Leaders know the pupils and their families well. They are considerate of pupils' needs and support them so that they overcome any barriers to their learning. Leaders have identified areas where support is most needed and addressed them promptly. They have provided pupils with a stable environment where they continue to grow in their learning. Leaders have high expectations that pupils will always be ready to learn. In response, pupils behave well, in and out of lessons. In rare instances when bullying occurs, staff deal with it promptly and effectively.

Pupils appreciate the opportunities that leaders create for them to enjoy their time in school. Pupils take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities which are organised in partnership with two local schools. They also enjoy competing with other schools in sporting events. Pupils remember many of the trips they have been on with fondness. For example, they relished their recent experience of theatre when they saw their favourite musical in the West End.

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

Leaders have reviewed and put in place a well-designed curriculum in this school. They have designed the curriculum to ensure that learning builds on what pupils already know and can do. They have worked with other schools in the trust to ensure that the subject content matches, and in some cases exceeds, the goals of the national curriculum.

Following the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders identified gaps in pupils' learning and put in place actions to ensure that pupils received help with things they were finding difficult. Staff use assessment to adjust their teaching so that pupils'

misconceptions are carefully addressed. As a result, pupils are learning the curriculum well.

In most subjects, teaching introduces new learning clearly. Teachers support pupils to develop the vocabulary they need to learn well in a subject. In the early years, for example, children use a wide range of vocabulary to describe the four seasons. In a few subjects, however, teaching does not focus on the knowledge that leaders have identified as being important for pupils' future learning. When this happens, it affects how well pupils are able to remember and apply this subject content. Leaders are working to develop teachers' expertise in these subjects.

Pupils take part actively in discussions in lessons. On the rare occasions pupils are distracted, they typically respond swiftly to teachers' reminders to refocus.

Leaders prioritise the teaching of early reading. They have developed the teaching of phonics to meet the needs of all pupils. Children start to learn how to read as soon as they join the Nursery. They are taught to distinguish sounds around their environment. This prepares them for learning their letter sounds when they move to the Reception Year.

Staff are trained well so that they deliver the chosen phonics programme consistently. Teachers give pupils ample opportunities to practise their phonics knowledge. Pupils read books which contain the letter sounds they already know. Pupils learn to decode confidently and are developing fluency in reading. Teachers regularly check how well pupils are learning in phonics. They identify those who are falling behind the programme. These pupils receive effective support and are catching up quickly. In a few instances, though, extra help is not sharply focused on strengthening how well these pupils blend together the sounds that they have learned. This can hamper their reading fluency.

Leaders work with parents and carers, and nurseries to identify children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), even before they join the school. Leaders also make effective use of guidance from specialists and therapists to meet pupils' needs in school. Across subjects, teachers make adaptations to help pupils with SEND to make sense of new ideas. For example, they deliver learning in small, manageable chunks and go over vocabulary and concepts before they are taught in class. As a result, pupils with SEND are learning the curriculum well.

Pupils are encouraged to develop their leadership skills. They undergo a rigorous selection process to become a member of the pupil parliament. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously. Leaders create opportunities for them to hone their skills. For example, leaders arrange for pupils to plan for and lead whole-school assemblies. Peer mediators from the older year groups are trained to resolve any occasional 'falling out' between other pupils.

Staff are proud to be part of this school. They appreciate that leaders are available for them if they need support. Teachers spoke about how leaders had streamlined some school procedures and that this has helped to ensure that their workload is manageable.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' towards safeguarding. They know what signs might indicate a pupil is at risk of neglect, abuse or exploitation. Staff are clear about what to do if they have any concerns.

Leaders' checks on the suitability of staff are rigorous. Records of these checks are monitored at both school level and through the trust's safeguarding team.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe at home, at school, or when online. For example, they learn about internet safety and stranger danger. Teachers discuss safeguarding scenarios with pupils and the actions they may take to keep themselves safe.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasions, extra help provided for reading does not focus on strengthening pupils' knowledge of how to blend sounds together. This can affect how pupils develop their reading fluency. Leaders should ensure that these pupils are supported to increase their reading fluency through well-planned opportunities to practise blending the sounds that they already know.
- In a few subjects, teaching does not focus on the significant knowledge that leaders expect pupils to learn. This means that, at times, pupils find it harder to recall this subject content and use it when they move on to study new concepts. Leaders should ensure that teachers have the training they need to develop their subject expertise and deliver the planned curriculum in these subjects effectively.

## 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 May 2017.

## 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>	140682
<b>Local authority</b>	Wandsworth
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241956
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	168
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Rama Venchard
<b>Headteacher</b>	Misbah Mann (Executive Headteacher) Donal Daly (Head of School)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://westbridgestepacademy.org/">https://westbridgestepacademy.org/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	16 and 17 May 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Leaders do not use alternative providers for any of the school's pupils.
- The school has undergone some major changes in recent years. They joined a new academy trust right at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020.

## 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 leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with the executive headteacher, the head of school and other members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspector also met with those responsible for governance, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were considered as part of this inspection.

- When inspecting safeguarding, the inspector carried out a scrutiny of the school's single central record of pre-employment checks as well as other records. The inspector considered the views of pupils, parents and staff through discussions and the responses to Ofsted's surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Edison David, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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