

Inspection of a good school: Morecambe and Heysham Westgate Primary School

Langridge Way, Westgate, Westgate Primary School, Morecambe, Lancashire LA4 4XF

Inspection dates:

18 and 19 January 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel happy at Westgate because they are well cared for. Children in early years settle in quickly and enjoy learning. Staff take time to get to know each pupil and their families. Pupils said that their school is a friendly place and 'everyone is welcome here'. There is a strong sense of community.

Pupils understand the high expectations that are set for their behaviour and their learning. Most behave sensibly. Pupils try their best in lessons and to follow the behaviour rules. They play cooperatively with their friends at social times. They enjoy it when everyone recognises them as 'Wonderful Westgaters' for their good behaviour and attitudes.

Pupils understand that everyone should be treated with respect regardless of their differences. They trust staff to take good care of them. Leaders deal with bullying and name-calling effectively. This helps pupils to feel safe.

Pupils usually remember what they have learned. However, pupils do not achieve as well as they should in some subjects. This is because leaders have not thought carefully enough about the important knowledge that pupils should gain.

Pupils enjoy taking on extra responsibilities in school. The pupil parliament is proud of the work they do in the local community. Pupils enjoy the range of clubs and activities that they can do after school, including sign language, chess and book club.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that is ambitious and covers a broad range of subjects. Leaders want pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to have high aspirations for themselves.

In some subjects, leaders have carefully considered how to build up pupils' knowledge over time. Leaders use their strong subject knowledge to support and guide their colleagues. This helps teachers to feel confident to deliver the curriculum. In these subjects, teachers use assessment strategies well to find out what pupils know and build pupils' knowledge over time. Pupils, including pupils with SEND, readily recall what they have learned in these subjects.

In other subjects, the curriculum content is not as well organised. In these subjects leaders have not made clear the exact knowledge that teachers need to teach and when to teach it. This makes it more difficult for teachers to build up pupils' knowledge securely, or to assess whether pupils have understood and remembered their learning. This means that pupils do not build their knowledge across the curriculum as well as they should.

Leaders are helping pupils to develop a love of reading. Leaders have taken steps to encourage older pupils to read more widely. Older pupils are enthusiastic about the books that they have read together in class.

Leaders have now changed the school's phonics programme with the aim of ensuring that more pupils become accurate and fluent readers. They are investing in books, resources and training for staff. This investment is enabling staff to develop their confidence and expertise in teaching phonics. However, a number of pupils find it hard to remember the phonics knowledge that they are learning and are not reading as well as they should be. These pupils do not always get the extra help that they need to catch up quickly enough. Consequently, not enough pupils become fluent and accurate readers by the end of Year 2.

Leaders identify the needs of pupils with SEND quickly and accurately. Leaders and staff work closely with parents and, when necessary, with a range of external professionals to support pupils with SEND. This helps pupils to get the support that they need to learn the same curriculum as their peers.

Staff support pupils' behaviour well. Pupils develop a growing understanding of the school's 'zones of regulation'. They use these to self-regulate and manage their own feelings and behaviour. Pupils say that this helps them to get ready for learning. Leaders have made sure that staff are well-trained to deal with any challenging behaviour in a sensitive and constructive way. This helps to minimise any disruption to pupils' learning.

Leaders ensure that pupils become responsible young members of society. Pupils respect people from families that are different to their own. Pupils learn how to keep themselves physically fit and about the importance of mental health. Leaders also make sure that all pupils benefit from a range of opportunities to develop their talents and interests. These include visits, visitors and sporting clubs.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They reported that leaders are approachable and that their workload is considered carefully.

Leaders and governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and of where things need to improve. They are working closely together to improve the quality of the curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know their local community well. They understand the challenges that their pupils face. As a result, leaders make sure staff receive appropriate training to identify pupils who are at risk of harm. They ensure that staff understand and carry out their safeguarding roles and responsibilities diligently. This includes providing support for pupils' emotional health and well-being.

Staff are vigilant and are quick to report any concerns they have about pupils. Leaders act swiftly on these concerns. They work with a range of external agencies to keep pupils safe. They ensure that pupils and their families get the timely support that they need.

Pupils are taught to keep safe when they are out and about in the community. Pupils also learn how to keep themselves safe when working or playing online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders' expectations of what pupils should know are not clear enough in some subjects. Teachers have not had enough clarity about what content to deliver and when. As a result, pupils have not learned and remembered the knowledge that they need in these subjects as well as they should over time. Leaders must ensure that they finalise what pupils should know and remember in these subjects from the early years to Year 6 so that pupils deepen their knowledge and develop their understanding over time.
- Pupils who find it difficult to remember the connections between letters and sounds do not always get the help they need to enable them to catch up. Therefore, not enough pupils make good progress through the phonics programme or learn to read accurately and fluently by the end of Year 2. Leaders must ensure that staff are supported to deliver the new phonics programme consistently well, and that effective help is provided for those pupils who need to catch up with their peers.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2012.

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

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| Unique reference number | 119347 |
| Local authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 10226076 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 573 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Vanessa Rigby |
| Headteacher | Keith Wright |
| Website | www.westgatesch.com |
| Date of previous inspection | 2 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- Leaders use one registered alternative provider.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed. There have also been several changes to the governing body, including the appointment of a new chair.

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 his evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. This involved visiting lessons with subject leaders, discussing subject curriculums, talking to pupils and teachers and looking at pupils' work. He also observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.

- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes, lunchtime and during lessons. He also talked to pupils about their views of the school.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. He also considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils and for staff.
- The inspector checked leaders' safeguarding procedures. He scrutinised a range of safeguarding documentation and considered how safeguarding incidents are managed and recorded.

Inspection team

James Blackwell, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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