

Inspection of a good school: Westwood Academy

Middleton Road, Oldham, Greater Manchester OL9 6BH

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 March 2023

Outcome

Westwood Academy 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?

Pupils, including children in the early years, flourish in this friendly and nurturing school. Westwood Academy is like a caring family. Pupils are extremely happy. They comment that they feel safe because they know staff look after them and will deal with any concerns they have. Pupils are confident that if bullying were to happen, leaders would deal with it quickly and effectively. Many parents and carers describe the school as 'amazing'.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. At playtimes, pupils play joyfully with their friends and staff in their well-resourced play area. Pupils' conduct in lessons and around school sets the tone for a calm and respectful school where pupils thrive. Leaders have high expectations for the achievement and behaviour of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils rise to these expectations.

Pupils participate in many clubs and activities. For example, pupils enjoy the art club and the multi-skills club. Pupils are excitedly preparing for a Shakespeare performance in a local coliseum. There are many leadership opportunities for pupils, including being a member of the school council or acting as a well-being ambassador.

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

Leaders have clearly identified the important knowledge that pupils should learn from Reception to Year 6. They have carefully considered when knowledge should be taught so that pupils can build successfully on earlier learning. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to deliver the curriculum effectively.

Staff check on what pupils remember from earlier content. They use effective strategies to identify and address gaps in pupils' learning. When needed, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to revisit previous learning. Many pupils know more and remember more over time. As a result, most pupils achieve very well across a range of subjects.

For many pupils, English is not the main language spoken at home. Leaders ensure that supporting pupils to become accurate and fluent readers is at the heart of pupils' learning. The well-structured reading curriculum ensures that pupils read with increasing confidence and expression as they move through school. Children begin to learn how to use their phonics knowledge as soon as they are in the Reception Year. Those who fall behind with their phonics get the support they need to catch up quickly. Teachers make sure that the books that pupils read are matched to the sounds they are learning.

Teachers and pupil librarians encourage pupils to read for pleasure by introducing them to different authors and genres of books. Pupils delight in reading and spoke enthusiastically to the inspector about books that they have particularly enjoyed.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. Learning in lessons is not interrupted. In the early years, children concentrate on their learning and play well together. Children learn routines when they start at the school. This helps them settle into school quickly. Pupils across the school are respectful and kind. They are polite to each other and check in on their friends, showing consideration for their well-being.

Leaders have high aspirations for pupils with SEND. Leaders identify the needs of these pupils accurately and in a timely way. Leaders work closely with teachers to adapt the delivery of the curriculum effectively for these pupils. This enables pupils with SEND to access all aspects of the curriculum, including any activities, trips and visits that the school offers.

Leaders focus on developing pupils' personal development. Pupils are knowledgeable on aspects such as different family arrangements and different religions. In lessons and assemblies, pupils learn about important and topical issues. For example, pupils could recall in some detail recent discussions about treating everyone with respect and keeping safe online.

Trustees are keen advocates for the school. They visit the school often and know the school extremely well. They are ambitious for its future. Staff appreciate that school leaders are mindful of their well-being and workload. They feel valued.

Parents hold the school in extremely high regard. Leaders engage well with them and involve them fully in the life of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make careful checks on all adults who work in school. They ensure that all staff receive regular training to keep their safeguarding knowledge up to date. Leaders ensure that this training enables staff to spot signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Staff follow clear procedures to report any concerns they have about a pupil.

Leaders and staff engage well with families and external agencies so that any pupils who may be in danger of harm get the help they need quickly.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. For instance, pupils are taught about online safety.

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 October 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

Unique reference number	141401
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10256133
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	217
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anne Weinstock
Principal	Sarah Wimperis
Website	www.westwood.theharmonytrust.org
Date of previous inspection	4 and 5 October 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Harmony Trust.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

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 this into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with the principal, other leaders and members of staff. She spoke with members of the board of trustees, including the chair of trustees. She also spoke with members of the executive leadership team, including the chief executive officer.
- The inspector looked at a range of leaders' documentation, including self-evaluation and safeguarding documents. She spoke with leaders about the school's safeguarding procedures.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. She talked with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at samples of children's and pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with children and pupils. She also observed some pupils reading to trusted staff.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in class and as they moved around the school. She also observed pupils playing at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- The inspector spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for parents, Parent View, including the free-text responses. She also met with parents before school to find out their views of the school.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Rebecca Sharples, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023