

Inspection of Westvale Primary School

Melverley Road, Westvale, Kirkby, Liverpool, Merseyside L32 0RQ

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 May 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Westvale Primary School is a place where everyone matters. Pupils grow in confidence due to the care and support that staff provide.

Pupils know that there are many trusted adults to talk to if they have a worry or concern. They feel happy and safe. There are a small number of pupils and parents who feel that their concerns about bullying are not always dealt with well enough. However, inspectors found that leaders and staff take decisive action to quickly and effectively nip any bullying or unkind behaviour in the bud.

Leaders have high aspirations for their pupils. They expect pupils to work hard and to treat each other with respect. Pupils proudly live up to the school's motto, 'Striving for Excellence, Caring for All'.

Pupils value taking part in different events and activities. For example, they enjoy showcasing their talents in the 'Westvale's got talent' annual competition. They also enjoy attending many clubs run by staff.

Despite the recent improvements, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should in some subjects.

Pupils spoke very warmly about staff in school. Many parents and carers, who shared their views with inspectors, welcome the changes that have taken place since the arrival of the new headteacher.

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

In most subjects, leaders and staff have considered what they want pupils to learn and when they will learn it from the early years to the end of Year 6. They have high ambition for all pupils, including the youngest children and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, until recently, some subject leaders have not had the opportunity to check how well their subjects are being taught.

In some subjects, leaders have not identified clearly enough the most important content that pupils need to have mastered over time. This means that teachers do not always emphasise the most crucial content that they want pupils to know and remember. Some pupils struggle to recall prior learning in some subjects or build on work covered earlier in the curriculum.

In most lessons, teachers explain new learning to pupils carefully. They use assessment methods well in some subjects. However, leaders and staff do not check well enough what pupils have understood over time. This means that some pupils have misconceptions that have not been fully addressed.

Pupils by the end of key stage 1 do not achieve well enough, particularly in writing. That said, by the end of key stage 2, pupils achieve well in most subjects.

Leaders have significantly strengthened their early reading programme. Staff teach this programme well. As a result, pupils who are in the early stages of learning to read get off to a strong start. They enjoy sharing books and joining in with songs and rhymes in the early years. Pupils read books which are well matched to their current understanding of sounds. Any pupil who may struggle to keep up with the programme quickly receives helpful support and guidance.

The oldest pupils have very positive attitudes to their reading. Pupils told inspectors that they love to read because 'you can let your imagination run wild'. They read well with expression and understanding. Pupils are very proud of their new school library.

Pupils know that it is important to follow the school rules. They display lovely manners and behave well. The youngest children learn new routines quickly. Pupils' learning is rarely disrupted by other pupils. However, a few pupils do not attend school often enough. This hampers their progress through the curriculum.

Staff identify the needs of pupils with SEND effectively. They quickly get the help and support they need so that they learn the same content as their peers. Pupils feel a valued part of the school community.

Pupils are proud to represent their school in different competitions and activities. Girls who spoke with inspectors told us that they have the same opportunities as boys. They value being part of the girls' football team. Pupils enjoy attending residential visits. These help them to grow in confidence and maturity. Older pupils enjoy acting as buddies to the younger children. Pupils also enjoy keeping fit and healthy. They like to participate in the school's daily mile.

Since the previous inspection, governors are more informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses. Together with the new headteacher, they have created a tight-knit team. Staff are very positive about the many improvements that the new headteacher has made. They now feel proud to attend the school. Staff feel valued. Their workload is well considered.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that staff have a secure and up-to-date knowledge of a range of safeguarding issues. Staff are alert and vigilant to the slightest concern about a pupil's welfare. They work effectively with different external agencies. Staff know their pupils and families well. They go out of their way to provide practical and emotional support.

Pupils are taught about different aspects of safety. They know about the importance of not giving out personal details when using the internet. Pupils also learn about stranger danger and road safety, as well as learning about the dangers of smoking or taking illegal drugs.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders have not identified clearly enough the most important content that pupils should remember. This means that staff do not have enough guidance about the key content to emphasise in lessons and in the longer term. Leaders should identify the key content that pupils should learn and check that pupils have retained this content over time.
- Teachers do not always use assessment information as well as they should. This means that some pupils develop misconceptions. Leaders should ensure that assessment information supports teachers to address misconceptions and to shape future teaching so that pupils learn the curriculum well.
- Some leaders have only recently been given the opportunity to check how well their subjects are taught. This means they do not have an up-to-date understanding of the strengths and weakness in their subject areas. Senior leaders should implement plans to enable subject leaders to check that their curriculums are being delivered effectively.
- Pupils at the end of key stage 1 do not achieve as well as their peers in published outcomes in writing. This means they are not as well prepared for the next stage of their education as they should be. Leaders should ensure that the recent improvements made to the writing curriculum result in these pupils achieving at least as well as other pupils nationally.
- A few pupils do not attend school often enough. This hinders their progress through the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that recent improvements are built on so that these pupils come to school regularly and on time.

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	104431
Local authority	Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Inspection number	10240702
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	226
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Hooshang Rahmani
Headteacher	Colin Richardson
Website	www.westvaleprimary.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	24 and 25 November 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders provide a breakfast club.
- Leaders make use of one alternative education provider. This alternative education provider is registered with Ofsted.
- The headteacher took up his post in January of this year.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection that 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 spoke with the headteacher, other leaders and staff in school. They spoke with governors, including the chair of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history with the curriculum leaders of these subject areas. Inspectors also visited lessons,

looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils. An inspector listened to pupils read to familiar adults.

- Inspectors also spoke with leaders from other areas of the curriculum. They looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils. They also looked at samples of pupils' writing.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and at lunchtimes. They also observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around the school.
- Inspectors evaluated leaders' safeguarding arrangements, self-evaluation documents and improvement plans.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors spoke with parents as they dropped their children off at school. They considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text responses.
- Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Louise McArdle, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Helen Friend

His Majesty's Inspector

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