

Inspection of a good school: Westerings Primary Academy

Sunny Road, Hawkwell, Hockley, Essex SS5 4NZ

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 May 2023

Outcome

Westerings Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

From the moment you walk into Westerings Primary Academy, you can tell that it is a special place. Whether it is walking down Diagon Alley to get to the Year 4 classes, or passing through Alice's Wonderland, there is always something interesting to see and do. Pupils love the plentiful outside spaces where they can choose to play football or adventure golf, or create imaginative stories in 'the fairy garden' and 'dinotopia'.

Pupils try hard and do their best. They know that leaders want the very best for them. As a result, pupils do well and are well prepared to move on to secondary school when the time comes.

Pupils are safe at school. Bullying is something that happens rarely. When things happen that worry or upset pupils, they know they can speak to any adult. Staff take pupils seriously and take prompt action to deal with any issues that arise.

Pupils are very polite and well mannered. They hold doors open for others to pass through and are considerate to adults and each other. This makes the school a friendly and welcoming place.

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

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad, interesting and well planned. They have thought very carefully about what pupils should learn and when. Leaders have identified the small steps in learning that pupils need to make to be successful. As a result, the curriculum serves pupils well.

Staff are given support and training to help them to hone their knowledge about the subjects they teach. Leaders provide coaching, and teach alongside other staff, to help them get even better at teaching phonics. Teachers develop their skills and knowledge by taking advantage of the wealth of opportunities provided by the trust. As a result, teachers have the knowledge they need to deliver the curriculum well.

Teachers think very carefully about how best to present new learning. Pupils are given tasks to do that enable them to practise and get better at the skills they have been taught. Teachers check pupils' learning regularly. They use this information to plan the best way to teach pupils the next steps.

Teachers adapt their teaching approaches to ensure that all pupils' needs are met. For example, where appropriate, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are taught important words that will be used in a lesson before that lesson takes place. This gives pupils with SEND the extra support they need to be successful. However, this provision is not always as precisely matched to pupils' individual needs as it could be.

Pupils achieve well during their time at Westerings Primary Academy. They remember much of what they have been taught and discuss their learning with maturity. Children get off to a really strong start in the early years. They begin to learn phonics as soon as they start school. Very quickly, children start to read short words and sentences. Similarly, children learn about the beginnings of mathematics well in the early years. This means that they are ready for key stage 1 when they move into Year 1.

Leaders are determined that all pupils learn to read well. They encourage pupils to develop a love of reading and to enjoy books. The library is at the heart of the school and is in constant use. When pupils find learning to read difficult, leaders ensure they are given the right support to help them to become proficient at this key skill.

Pupils behave very well, in their classrooms and as they move about the school. They are interested in their learning and listen carefully to their teachers. This means that lessons are not disrupted and everyone can concentrate on their learning.

Pupils are offered a very wide range of opportunities including music, sports and science clubs. Almost all disadvantaged pupils attend a club because leaders actively encourage and enable them to do so. Pupils earn 'nut notes' for behaving well or doing their best. They spend the school's currency in the 'nut market', a shop operated by pupils under the leadership of a pupil 'CEO.'

Leaders have ensured that not only is the school a great place to learn but it is also a great place to work. Staff are extremely positive about the school. They feel valued and supported by leaders. This helps the school to be a harmonious place, where what is best for pupils is at the heart of all its work.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They know that they can talk to any member of staff and that the adults in school will always help them.

Staff are well trained to spot possible signs of abuse or neglect. They understand and follow the headteacher's message that, 'There is nothing more important than

safeguarding.' Staff report concerns promptly. The designated safeguarding leads take appropriate action, when necessary.

Safer recruitment processes are robust. The single central record shows that all the required pre-appointment checks are carried out before anyone is allowed to work in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Provision for pupils with SEND is not always sufficiently fine-tuned to their individual needs. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders should take action to further develop provision, so that it is optimally focused on individual needs, in order that pupils with SEND achieve exceptionally well.

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 March 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	137405
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10241542
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	402
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Hall
Headteacher	Adam Stainsbury
Website	www.westerings.org
Date of previous inspection	15 March 2017

Information about this school

- Westerings Primary Academy is part of the Academies Enterprise Trust. It joined the multi-academy trust on 1 September 2011, when it converted to become an academy.
- The previous executive headteacher left the school in August 2021 to take up the role of regional director within the multi-academy trust. The current headteacher, who was previously head of school, took up his post in September 2021.
- The school has increased in size since the previous inspection. There are now two classes in each year group from Reception to Year 6.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspector carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with: the headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher; the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo); leaders of subjects; the chair of the academy council and groups of staff. The inspector also met with the multi-academy trust's regional director (in person) and the national director of education (via videocall).
- 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 to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also listened to pupils reading to staff, scrutinised a range of school documents and carried out a learning walk throughout the school.
- In order to check the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector checked the single central record of pre-appointment checks, looked at records of child protection concerns and spoke with staff and pupils.
- The inspector took account of 96 responses to Ofsted Parent View and the same number of free-text comments. The inspector also took account of 31 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and one letter received from a pupil.

Inspection team

Wendy Varney, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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