

# Inspection of a good school: Westfield School

Ryeland's Road, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 8NZ

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Inspection dates:

24 and 25 October 2023

## **Outcome**

Westfield School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils thrive at Westfield School. They value the positive relationships they have with staff. Staff are nurturing and caring, and, in turn, pupils are kind to each other. Pupils feel safe and so they are willing to try new things. As a result, pupils achieve well.

Staff know their pupils exceptionally well. Staff understand pupils' wants and needs, and so pupils flourish. Parents are extremely positive about their children's education. One parent summed up the staff when they said, 'They believe in the children and nurture their uniqueness.' It is because of this that pupils make such good progress from their starting points.

The school makes sure that pupils are known in their community. Pupils are taught to use the local leisure centre, library, cafes and shops. Older pupils attend local work experience placements, and younger pupils are supported to explore their surroundings. Pupils are prepared well for adulthood.

Pupils remain part of the school even after they have left. Ex-students visit the school to share their news. Staff support them if they are finding their new placement hard. These continued relationships help current pupils feel confident that they can be successful in the future.

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

Every pupil is welcomed and included at Westfield School. The school has made sure that the well-planned curriculum is flexible. It builds from each child's starting point and matches their individual needs. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They make regular checks on pupils' learning to make sure that pupils are making the progress they should. Students in the sixth form follow a curriculum that matches their talents and interests. They can choose to learn about things that interest them, such as radio production, driving or plant care. Well-considered work experience helps students to make the right choices about their future placements.

The teaching of communication is a strength. Pupils sign, use symbols and speak with confidence. Children in Nursery and Reception happily engage in morning routines with their peers at the start of the day. They learn to communicate well with others.

The school has prioritised reading. There is a well-considered phonics curriculum in place. Staff use adapted materials to make sure that pupils understand what they are reading. Pupils practise reading books that match the sounds they are learning. Older pupils learn to follow and write instructions to prepare them to be independent. Pupils enjoy choosing books from the well-stocked library.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is threaded through all aspects of the school. Pupils learn about keeping safe, about careers and about money so that they are ready for their next steps. Each year, students in the sixth form attend a week-long residential. They learn how to plan, buy and prepare meals, plan activities and share living spaces with others. They are taught to become increasingly independent.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of trips and visits. They visit places of worship and a local farm, and they have strong links with the local church. They visit the theatre and sing in local school concerts. Older pupils visit local colleges and adult placements to help them choose the most appropriate next steps after they leave the school.

Westfield School is a calm and purposeful learning environment. Pupils are taught to identify their emotions so that they can begin to manage their behaviours. Pupils learn to be accepting of one another's difficulties and to look out for one another. Pupils who are finding it tricky to manage their behaviours are supported through focused behaviour plans. Staff are adept at spotting the smallest signs that pupils may need help and so make sure that pupils' needs are met.

The headteacher leads with compassion. She is a determined advocate for pupils in the school. She works with exceptional drive and commitment. This ensures that pupils receive a highly effective education. However, too many systems rely on the hard work of a small number of leaders, and some work, such as policy development, is at risk of slipping as a result.

Those responsible for governance are knowledgeable and committed. They appreciate that leaders in the school work tirelessly and support them by prioritising aspects of their work. However, this means that some important tasks do not get completed. Although those responsible for governance have reviewed the leadership capacity in the school, the actions they have taken do not address this well enough.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Some aspects of the school's work are not monitored as systematically as they could be. This makes it more difficult for leaders to spot patterns and trends as quickly as they could. The school should review its approaches to monitoring and evaluating its work so that it can focus on the things that will make the biggest difference.
- Leadership capacity is stretched. This means that some aspects of the school's work do not get the attention that leaders would like. The school should review leadership roles and responsibilities to ensure that all aspects of its provision match its ambitions for the school.

## 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 March 2013.

## 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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years,

looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	117055
<b>Local authority</b>	Herefordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10257033
<b>Type of school</b>	All-through
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	72
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	14
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Ceri Hibbert
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nicki Gilbert
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.westfield.hereford.sch.uk">www.westfield.hereford.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils with severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties, multi-sensory impairment and complex autism.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other senior leaders, other leaders, governors, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects and visited some lessons across the curriculum.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents relating to the work of the school.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders and staff about the wider work of the school.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their experiences in school.
- Inspectors took into account the views of parents, including reviewing Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors reviewed the staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Claire Price, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Stevens

His Majesty's Inspector

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