

# Inspection of Westborough Academy

Macdonald Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex SS0 9BS

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Inspection dates: 13 and 14 February 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Good**

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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Early years provision

**Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Tonya Brook. This school is part of the South East Essex Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Andrew Cooper, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Neal Misell.

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

Pupils enjoy attending school. They play alongside each other at playtimes and lunchtimes safely. Pupils are positive about the many changes that the school has made. These are having a positive impact on behaviour in classrooms and around school.

The school is ambitious for all pupils, continuing to develop the curriculum further. In subjects where the curriculum is more developed, pupils learn well. They are enthusiastic and excited about their schoolwork, including confidently reading the books they receive. Pupils also delight in their ability to recall historical events and subject-specific vocabulary.

In the early years, staff guide children to follow routines and develop their independence. With a strong understanding of early childhood education, staff nurture children's ability to focus for sustained periods in their learning and play. Children develop curiosity and interest in the world around them. By learning and playing together with their friends, they develop positive attitudes to education. Children leave the early years very well prepared for the demands of Year 1.

Pupils gain a lot from their outdoor learning. For example, a focus on bushcraft allows pupils to learn how to safely use a sharp knife to create wood shavings for fire lighting.

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

The school has undertaken extensive work to develop the curriculum, supported by the trust. Teachers show strong subject knowledge, and they present the information clearly. They understand how to sequence lessons in a way that enables pupils to remember concepts, words and skills. For example, pupils in Year 5 learned different stitches first, meaning they were then able to select the correct stitch when staff introduced the making of a stuffed toy. The school sets high aspirations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Simple adjustments, such as access to reference cards, help pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum alongside their peers.

A few staff are relatively new to leading subjects. They are full of enthusiasm and are receiving useful support to develop their leadership skills. This includes guidance on how to set out and monitor what pupils learn. Understandably, where this is the case, the quality of the curriculum is still developing.

The school fosters a positive reading culture. It begins in the early years. Staff use lively storybook reading to develop children's knowledge of words and storylines. There is a clear and well-structured phonics curriculum in place. Staff have received the training they need to teach phonics well. Pupils read books that are matched well to the sounds they know. This helps them to focus on reading fluently and with increasing expression. Staff quickly spot pupils who need additional practice with

their reading. Pupils receive effective support to help them catch up quickly so that they are not hindered in their learning.

Pupils learn about the wider world through the well-established personal, social health and economic curriculum. Pupils learn about how to stay safe online and how to recognise healthy and unhealthy relationships. By providing opportunities for pupils to take on leadership roles, the school instils a sense of responsibility and empathy in pupils. Those who have these roles, such as school council members, actively contribute to the school community. They understand how they are helping others. Pupils can talk about their understanding of difference and diversity. They know why prejudice and discrimination are wrong.

Pupils treat each other with kindness and respect. They are polite, friendly and eager to converse with adults. Where pupils fall short of the high expectations, they receive support to regulate their behaviours. This includes in-school support, as well as external support where necessary so that they can return to their learning.

The work with families has improved attendance levels. Pupils who in the past did not attend regularly, now attend well. This allows them to build upon what they have learned and remember the steps in their learning.

Staff are highly skilled in supporting children in the early years to increase the range of words that they use as part of their learning and to communicate with others. Pupils engage enthusiastically with songs and rhymes as they practise correct pronunciation. They quickly learn to count objects and know that if you 'take away', then the number reduces.

Governors have undertaken training so that they understand their roles well. Governors provide effective support and challenge that help leaders to continually improve the quality of education that pupils receive. Governors fulfil their statutory duties with diligence. Governors take pride in their roles. They visit the school to monitor first hand the impact made.

Staff feel supported with their workload and well-being and are active participants in the development of the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The curriculum leaders new to their role are still refining the subjects they lead. As a result, staff do not fully understand what content they should teach pupils. Leaders, including those from the trust, should continue providing the training

and support these leaders need to strengthen the curriculum and teaching of it to maximise pupils' achievement.

## 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>	145010
<b>Local authority</b>	Southend-on-Sea
<b>Inspection number</b>	10295101
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	458
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Neal Misell
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Andrew Cooper
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tonya Brook
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.thewestboroughschool.co.uk">www.thewestboroughschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	21 and 22 September 2021, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school joined the South East Essex Academy Trust in September 2021.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other members of the leadership team. The lead inspector held a discussion with members of the governing body, a representative of the trust board and the chief

executive officer.

- Deep dives were carried out by inspectors in early reading, mathematics, modern foreign languages (French) and design and technology. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also listened to some pupils reading.
- Discussions were held with leaders about the curriculum in a number of other subjects, and inspectors reviewed a range of pupils' books.
- 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 pupils' interests.
- Inspectors considered the 124 views expressed by parents in their responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included 76 free-text comments. The lead inspector also spoke with some parents at the end of the school day.
- The responses to Ofsted's online surveys from 47 staff and 124 pupils were considered.

### **Inspection team**

Ahson Mohammed, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Nicola Shadbolt	Ofsted Inspector
Laura Hewer	Ofsted Inspector

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