

Inspection of West Hill Primary School

High Mount Street, Hednesford, Cannock, Staffordshire WS12 4BH

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 February 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This school provides pupils with a good education. Different subjects are organised and taught in interesting ways that motivate pupils. From the early years through to Year 6, lessons are carefully planned and new learning builds on what has gone before. Caring leadership and capable teaching support all to achieve.

Pupils' behaviour is managed well. Good behaviour is noticed and rewarded. Bullying is not accepted. If it happens, the school acts quickly to stop it. If any pupils need help to manage their feelings or behaviour then the school provides firm, kind and consistent support, including well-thought-out nurture provision. This allows lessons and breaktimes to run smoothly. It also means that everyone feels safe at school. The rules are fair and any problems are usually sorted out quickly.

The information provided for parents is extensive. There are curriculum workshops and information events. The school's website provides lots of detail about school life and how to support learning at home.

Pupils enjoy their lessons. Most attend regularly and on time. They feel valued at school and are guided to grow into responsible, caring and friendly young people. Indeed, the school prepares pupils well for later life.

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

West Hill Primary has efficient leadership, informed governance, a structured curriculum and clear expectations for pupils' behaviour. The school runs smoothly and pupils make progress in lots of ways.

The school has responded well to Ofsted's previous recommendations. The approach to early reading has been strengthened by more staff training and resources. In the pre-school classes, staff help children to enjoy the rhythm and patterns of letters, rhymes and songs. This attention to sounds and words paves the way for formal phonics teaching in Reception and key stage 1. This is effective. By the end of Year 2, most children have mastered the phonic code. For those who take longer to learn, the school provides regular catch-up reading sessions.

Alongside phonics, the school has an effective whole-school approach to teaching pupils how to form letters correctly. Staff present their own handwriting carefully and take care to speak clearly so that pupils have good models to follow.

Beyond phonics, there is a healthy reading culture across the school. Links with the local library, author visits and book promotions help to widen pupils' knowledge of literature. In addition, the school provides helpful information for parents about how they can support reading at home. During this inspection, for instance, there was an after-school 'starbooks' club where parents could come with their children to share and talk about books.

Mathematics is similarly well organised, with clear guidance and resources for staff to use so that the right things get taught. This is the case in other subjects too. Each term's work is linked through a 'theme' with focused attention to progression in different subjects. For example, deliberate attention to the language of instruction in early years sets the foundations for later learning about algorithms and computer programming.

Assessment happens regularly. Much of this is helpful, particularly in English and mathematics. However, in some other subjects staff record what pupils have covered but do not necessarily prompt them to use what they know so they embed knowledge. This means they sometimes forget things.

Any special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified accurately. The school adapts lessons and resources so that pupils with SEND can access the full curriculum. The school also supports pupils who find it hard to manage their emotions or behaviour. Staff have received specialist training and there is a nurture provision that gives pupils a quiet space where they can feel calm and secure.

A notable feature is the attention to pupils' social development. At lunchtimes, staff remind everyone about good manners. On the playground, activities are planned with deliberate care so that pupils learn how to interact in constructive ways. Play leaders and well-being 'champs' are on hand to make sure no one is left out. This helps to make the school a friendly place where everyone feels valued.

Staff say they like working here and that leaders consider their welfare when making decisions. Those staff who have recently stepped up to new leadership roles feel confident that the school is providing them with the right support. This is helping to develop their oversight of the curriculum.

Most parents who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire or spoke with inspectors were happy with the school. They value the visible leadership, quality of care and education provided.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment in several foundation subjects is still developing. Currently, the school records what pupils have done but does not necessarily help pupils to use what they know. This means they forget some important content. The school should

explore ways to refine the approach to assessment so that it helps pupils to embed important knowledge and use it fluently.

- Some subject leaders are new to their leadership roles or have recently taken on a new subject. This means that their oversight of the curriculum is at different stages of development. The school should continue to support subject leaders with appropriate training and guidance so that they can do their jobs as well as possible.

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

Unique reference number	124072
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10294546
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	391
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tom Truby
Headteacher	Kelly Bracebridge
Website	www.westhill.staffs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	9 and 10 November 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a pre-school nursery that takes children from two-years-old.
- A private provider offers before and after-school childcare on the school site. This is subject to a different inspection at a different time.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

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

- The inspectors considered published performance data about the school. Inspectors also looked at a range of school documents. These included information about pupils' behaviour, attendance, the curriculum, extra-curricular activities, governance, school improvement planning and documents published on the school's website.
- During the inspection, the inspectors had formal meetings with the headteacher, other leaders, school staff, pupils and governors. The lead inspector spoke on the telephone with a local authority officer.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, geography and science. In these subjects, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and considered pupils' work. They also considered the curriculum in other subjects to check how they were organised, taught and assessed. An inspector observed some pupils reading to staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 talked informally with pupils, parents and staff to gather general information about school life. They took account of the responses to Ofsted's surveys of staff, pupils' and parents' views.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in class, at lunchtime, on the playground and at other times during the day.

Inspection team

Martin Pye, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gary Richards	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Potter	Ofsted Inspector

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