

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Testwood School

Testwood Lane, Totton, Southampton, Hampshire SO40 3ZW

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Inspection dates:

19 and 20 November 2024

## **Outcome**

Testwood School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

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

Pupils are rightly proud and happy to be part of this inclusive and caring school. Pupils and staff enjoy positive and mutually respectful relationships. The school has a clear vision for continued improvement and has high expectations of pupils' achievement. The school has made several recent changes to ensure that this level of ambition is realised.

The school has taken recent action to improve behaviour. This is leading to a calm and purposeful place for pupils to learn. Staff and pupils understand the school's behaviour expectations. Incidents of poor behaviour are now lower and declining. In lessons, there is very little low-level disruption. Pupils enjoy learning and are able to focus on their work. They feel safe and know they can talk to adults if they have concerns. They trust adults to take their concerns seriously.

Parents and carers are positive about the school. They particularly appreciate the high levels of support that pupils get when they join the school. For example, new pupils feel welcomed by other pupils and the school communicates regularly with parents. Parents say that their children settle in very quickly from the start.

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

The school identified that pupils were not attaining as well as they could because not enough time was spent building knowledge and understanding in key stage 3. The school has recently redesigned the curriculum. Pupils learn more content in subjects before choosing their key stage 4 options, which now start in Year 10. Pupils are now gaining a greater depth of knowledge in these subjects.

The school's high ambition for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is realised. The school trains staff to identify when pupils may require support to succeed with their full curriculum. The school provides additional help swiftly. As a result, pupils with SEND engage fully with their curriculum, achieve well and participate in the wider life of the school.

The school has programmes to improve the phonics knowledge, fluency and comprehension for pupils at the early stages of reading. These programmes are having a positive impact and help pupils to access more of the curriculum.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They present this well, focusing on the key knowledge that the school wants pupils to learn. However, the teaching of subject specific vocabulary is not consistent across the curriculum. This means that, in some lessons, some pupils are not clear about the new words they need to use or what these words mean. In these instances, pupils do not access learning activities as well as they could.

Teachers routinely check pupils' work in all subjects. Starter activities at the beginning of lessons help teachers to check on pupils' recall of previous learning. Many teachers provide pupils with useful feedback, which helps them understand how to improve their work. In many lessons, pupils are clear what they need to do to strengthen their work. However, this is not consistent across the school and sometimes pupils are unclear about what they need to do to improve.

The school has implemented highly effective strategies to improve attendance for some pupils. For these pupils, absence rates have reduced notably and far fewer of these pupils are now persistently absent. However, this approach is not embedded across the whole school. Therefore, the work to improve attendance is having less impact on a few pupils than it could have.

Pupils enjoy the breadth of extra-curricular provision, stating that there, 'is something for everyone'. Ambassadors for clubs encourage and support pupils to participate. Pupils are taught about fundamental British values and can link these to the school values. The new personal, social and health education programme helps pupils to acquire the skills and development that they need to prepare for life beyond school. For example, the careers and post-16 choices provision are extensive.

Leaders and the trust have taken recent action to improve outcomes for pupils. This is having a positive impact across the school. Staff are very positive about leaders' consideration of their workload and how they prioritise staff well-being. Trustees have high ambition for the school. They know the school well and understand the rationale for making improvements which have recently been implemented.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- There is some variability in the teaching of subject-specific vocabulary. This means that in lessons, some pupils do not fully understand the content they are learning. The school should ensure that pupils understand the key vocabulary they need to complete their work.
- There is some variability in the checks of pupils' understanding. This means that staff feedback does not consistently support pupils to improve their work. The school should support staff to check understanding carefully and use this information to provide clear feedback to pupils.
- The school's approach to improve attendance is not consistently applied with some pupils. This means that some pupils are not getting the precise support they need to ensure they attend school regularly. The school should ensure that their attendance strategy is implemented consistently across the school.

## Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in June 2015.

## 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>	137315
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10341690
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	876
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Kevin Williams
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tim Webber
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.testwoodschool.co.uk/">www.testwoodschool.co.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15 January 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in September 2023.
- The school uses 5 registered and 11 unregistered alternative provision providers to support a small number of pupils.
- 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 evaluation 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.

- During the inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher and members of the trust board. They also met with other senior and middle leaders, including those responsible for safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, and personal development.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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.

### **Inspection team**

Paul Hemmings, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Julie Summerfield

Ofsted Inspector

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