

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Westlands First School

Farmers Way, Westlands, Droitwich, Worcestershire WR9 9EQ

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 February 2025

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at this nurturing and welcoming school. They are happy and safe. Pupils know that staff care about them and will help them if they feel worried or unhappy. The school recognises that some pupils and families face difficulties or issues in their lives. The school quickly and sensitively gives, and seeks out, help and support for these pupils and families. The school is determined that pupils are safe and well and ready to learn. This is a strength of the school and is at the heart of its ethos. Pupils, parents and carers value this.

The school expects pupils to behave well. This starts in Nursery and Reception, where children learn to be kind and share. Pupils respond well to the school's high expectations of their behaviour. Pupils who find managing their behaviour more difficult receive the support they need. Strong relationships built on trust and care help pupils develop positive attitudes to school life.

The school is ambitious for all its pupils. It wants pupils to do well at school and be ready for their next stage in education, and they are. Pupils enjoy their learning and want to learn.

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

The school knows its pupils and families extremely well. It wants pupils to develop the skills, academic and social, that will help them be successful. Pupils respond well to this. The school has invested in developing the concept of 'Happy Minds'. Pupils know how the brain works and influences the way they feel. 'Happiness heroes' identify pupils who are doing things well or showing acts of kindness. Pupils enjoy putting glass pebbles in a jar when they see, or do, something good. This approach is having a positive impact. Pupils

explained how they use the approach to calm themselves and to tackle new learning more confidently.

Reading is a school priority. Story times happen daily. Pupils vote for the books they want to listen to. School displays, the recently revamped library and the new outdoor reading hub help pupils develop a love of reading. The teaching of early reading is strong. Staff have received high-quality training, which helps them teach well. Staff check pupils' phonics knowledge effectively and ensure that pupils read books matching the sounds they know. As a result, pupils learn to read well with increasing confidence and understanding. Any pupils who find learning to read more difficult receive support quickly and effectively.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes settle well. They enjoy learning in the indoor and outdoor spaces. The school's approach to early mathematics helps children become fluent in number and learn about shapes and patterns. Staff develop children's language well. Teachers know which children need extra support and provide it. As a result, children are happy, confident and successful learners.

Pupils develop secure subject knowledge, such as in mathematics. Many can recall key number facts and multiplication facts well. Most can explain their reasoning confidently. The recent development of the curriculum in subjects such as history, geography and design technology is also having a positive impact. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm, confidence and impressive knowledge, such as about The Great Fire of London, volcanoes and the difference between lava and magma, and the settlements of Droitwich and further afield. Pupils take pride in this learning. However, pupils' handwriting is not always of a high standard. This limits pupils' ability to accurately record their knowledge and understanding and present their work clearly. Opportunities to ascertain how well the curriculum is delivered are limited, so the school does not have a consistent view of how well pupils do in all subjects.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) participate fully in all school activities. Pupils with SEND have their needs swiftly identified and met. The school adapts the curriculum and environment to ensure pupils with SEND can learn alongside their peers. Pupils with SEND achieve well.

Pupils learn about fundamental British values and can relate them to their own experiences. They learn about different religions, including Christianity, Hinduism and Islam. This prepares them for life in modern Britain.

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance. Most pupils attend well. When any concerns about pupils' attendance arise, staff put in place effective support.

The school provides opportunities for pupils to develop skills and talents. Educational visits and visitors enrich the curriculum. Pupils watch children's television news with staff and discuss the items they see. This helps them understand issues such as conservation, information technology and internet safety.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They feel valued. Governors provide strong support and challenge to the school and take the well-being of staff seriously.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school does not ensure the teaching of handwriting is consistent. Poor letter formation, orientation and accuracy impacts on some pupils accurate recording of the knowledge and skills they have learned. The school should ensure its approach to the teaching of handwriting enables all pupils to write with accuracy and fluency.
- Some subject leaders have not yet had the opportunity to monitor and evaluate their subjects fully. This means the school cannot be sure how well pupils are doing and what is working well in some subjects. The school should put in place appropriate measures to enable subject leaders to check how well pupils are learning.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in January 2020.

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	116671
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10371380
Type of school	First
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Colin Barratt
Headteacher	Rachel Roberts
Website	www.westlands.worcs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	28 and 29 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a breakfast club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. She also met with members of the governing body, including the chair.
- The inspector met with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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.
- Throughout the inspection, the inspector met with groups of staff. She also considered the opinions expressed through the staff survey.
- The inspector met with some parents during the inspection and had regard to the views expressed through Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Tina Willmott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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