

Inspection of a good school: Westfield School

Highfield Road, Bourne End, Buckinghamshire SL8 5BE

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 February 2024

Outcome

Westfield School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils happily and regularly attend this calm and inclusive school. They feel safe when they are at the school and learn how to be safe as part of their wider community. The pupils here have complex neurodevelopmental and learning needs. Staff know their pupils very well and put in place effective and precise support, which means that pupils achieve well.

A sense of warmth is evident in the relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils know that adults want the best for them, and they trust the decisions that adults make, alongside their parents, to help them. Behaviour is therefore mostly positive throughout the school. Break and lunch times are well supported, and pupils play together with kindness and respect. Pupils understand and adhere to the rules and routines set by the school during social times. Sometimes, pupils do find it difficult to manage their emotions. When this happens, expertly trained staff are effective in supporting pupils to become regulated and calm.

The school is changing parts of the curriculum to be appropriate for the evolving needs of pupils who attend here. It has high expectations and ambitions for pupils. As a result, most pupils strive to achieve their best in their learning and conduct.

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

Over recent years, there has been a notable shift in the needs of the pupils who attend the school. Due to this, the school has had to prioritise which changes to make first to the school's curriculum. Most subjects taught at the school, especially the core curriculum areas, form a well-sequenced and ambitious curriculum. In these subject areas, the school has defined the order of the knowledge pupils will learn. For those at the very earliest stages of development, the focus is on the key early literacy and numeracy knowledge pupils will need to be ready for learning higher up in the school.

In a small number of subjects, leaders have not completed their work on mapping out the knowledge that pupils need to learn. Consequently, in these subjects, pupils do not learn as well as they could. However, through most of the school's curriculum, pupils do achieve well and are being well prepared for their next steps.

Staff are expert teachers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They provide precise and individualised support for pupils in lessons. As a result, lesson activities are engaging, bespoke and meet the needs of pupils well. Assessment is effectively used by staff to spot when pupils have gaps in knowledge. This is evident in the teaching of early reading, where staff use information from assessments to put in place extra activities to help pupils learn to read.

Pupils have highly positive attitudes to learning. This is reflected in the high levels of attendance across the school. It is also evident in classrooms where low-level disruption is rare. Pupils enjoy coming to school and learning. The expert support they receive from staff helps them to become independent and resilient learners.

Pupils' personal development is at the heart of what the school does. The school has a precise personal development programme, comprising of four key areas. These include 'forest schools', social and emotional education, independence skills and the specialist curriculum. These have been crafted, alongside external professionals, to make sure that pupils build the skills needed to be able to learn. The expert teaching of these four areas also prepares pupils to be part of their wider community. From the youngest stages of the school, pupils are taught about difference and respect. As they move through the school, pupils develop their understanding further by learning about and celebrating various religions and cultures.

Leaders at this school have been effective in responding to the changing needs of pupils. They have a clear and robust vision for moving the school forward. Staff are happy and proud to work at the school. They feel highly valued by leaders and are highly motivated to help pupils achieve their best.

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 is in the process of developing its approach to some foundation subjects in the curriculum. Currently, pupils are not learning as well as they could across the entire curriculum. The school should prioritise the ambitious design and sequencing of these subject areas and ensure that staff have the knowledge and training to implement the curriculum consistently well.
- Some middle leaders are new to their roles, and their vision is not yet fully realised. Consequently, in some foundation subjects, some staff do not have the knowledge

required to implement the curriculum consistently. The school should ensure that ongoing development, support and challenge enable those leaders to have a positive impact on the implementation of their subject.

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 February 2014.

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	131933
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10287985
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	76
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mike Ware
Headteacher	Tara Deakes
Website	www.westfieldschoolbucks.org
Date of previous inspection	15 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Westfield School provides specialist support for pupils with moderate learning difficulties and additional learning barriers such as autism and speech, language and communication needs. All pupils attending the school have an education, health and care plan.
- The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

The inspector carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher and other members of the leadership team. They also met with the chair and two other members of the governing body.
- The lead inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: communication and early reading, mathematics, humanities and the personal development programme. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons. They also spoke to pupils in lessons and during play and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors considered a range of documents, including leaders' evaluations of the school, their school improvement plan and minutes from governors' meetings.
- The inspectors spoke to parents and carers and considered their responses to Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspectors took account of the views of staff through conversations and the responses to the online staff survey.
- 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.

Inspection team

Nina Marabese, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Richard Kearsey

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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