

Inspection of a good school: Westmorland Primary School

Westmorland Drive, Brinnington, Stockport, Cheshire SK5 8HH

Inspection dates:

18 and 19 July 2023

Outcome

Westmorland Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is at the heart of its local community. Pupils bask in the care and support that leaders provide. Staff go out of their way to get to know pupils and their families well. They offer both emotional and practical support on a daily basis. This helps pupils to feel secure, happy and safe.

Staff and pupils enjoy warm and nurturing relationships with each other. Pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), know that there are many trusted staff who they can go to if they have any troubles or concerns. Leaders deal with any rare incidents of bullying swiftly and effectively.

Leaders and staff have high hopes for all pupils' achievement and behaviour. Pupils strive to be 'Westmorland Warriors'. They work hard, achieve well and treat each other kindly.

Pupils benefit from a variety of opportunities to deepen their learning beyond the classroom. For example, they enjoy visits from guest speakers and organisations, such as the Hallé orchestra. They also proudly displayed their work as part of an art exhibition that they hosted for their parents.

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

Leaders have high ambitions for their pupils. They provide them with rich experiences as part of the school's M.O.R.E. (memorable learning, oracy, reading and real experiences) curriculum. Leaders have made sure that the key knowledge that pupils will be taught is introduced in manageable chunks so that pupils can build on their knowledge and deepen their learning from early years to the end of key stage 2.

Teachers explain new learning to pupils carefully. They check pupils' understanding and quickly spot and address any misconceptions. This supports pupils to build on earlier concepts.

Overall, pupils achieve well across a range of subjects. However, in the most recent national assessments, pupils at the end of key stage 1 did not perform as well as other pupils nationally. Leaders have quickly addressed this issue. Outcomes for these pupils are rapidly improving. However, some pupils' progress through the curriculum is hindered by their frequent absences from school.

Pupils with SEND thrive at this school. This is because highly trained and committed staff rapidly identify their needs and provide them with timely and effective support. For the most part, pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their peers. The vast majority of parents and carers, who shared their views with the inspector, spoke very highly of the support that staff provide.

Leaders know the key to successful reading is to grasp every opportunity to develop children's vocabulary and love of books. This begins with gusto in the early years. Children enjoy sharing books with their teachers and other children.

Leaders have recently introduced a new phonics curriculum, which staff implement well overall. Staff quickly spot any pupils in danger of falling behind. However, the strategies that some staff use to support struggling readers when reading one-to-one are not always the most effective. This means that some of these pupils find it hard to read new words with confidence. Older pupils, however, read with good expression and understanding. They have positive attitudes to reading and can talk about a range of different authors.

Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and work well together. Learning is very rarely disturbed by any instances of poor behaviour. The youngest children show very positive attitudes to their learning.

Leaders believe that the way to unlock pupils' potential is to provide them with a wide range of opportunities to be active and responsible citizens. Pupils spoke proudly about the work that they do to help others. This includes collecting and distributing food hampers to local residents. Pupils also enjoy taking on various leadership roles in school.

Pupils know that it is important to keep fit and healthy. They spoke animatedly about representing the school in various sporting competitions. They also know it is important to eat well and to look after their own mental health. Pupils particularly enjoy using the school's new outdoor gym equipment.

Staff support pupils to develop a secure understanding of British values, such as democracy, by encouraging them to take part in the annual elections for the new head boy and head girl each year.

Governors share leaders' commitment and vision for the school. They hold leaders to account by checking that money is spent wisely. They also check that safeguarding records are accurate and up to date.

Staff are proud to be part of such a tight-knit school community. They feel that leaders consider their workload and well-being in their decision-making.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff care a great deal about pupils and their families. This is one of the key strengths of the school. The pastoral and safeguarding team makes sure that staff are well trained in a wide range of safeguarding issues and concerns. Staff are highly vigilant and waste no time in alerting senior leaders to any potential safeguarding incidents or concerns. Leaders also work very effectively with external agencies.

Pupils show an impressive amount of knowledge about different aspects of safety. This includes understanding how to avoid being drawn into gang culture and knife crime, as well as knowing about how to stay safe when using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some staff do not use the most effective strategies to support struggling readers. This hinders pupils' ability to read unseen books with confidence. Leaders should make sure that staff receive appropriate training so that pupils who struggle with their reading are supported effectively and quickly become confident and fluent readers.
- Too many pupils do not attend school often enough. This limits how well these pupils learn. Leaders should build on their strategies to secure good attendance so that all pupils attend school regularly.

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 July 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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	132121
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	10291427
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	504
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Keith Thompson
Headteacher	Martin Henderson
Website	www.westmorlandprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 July 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- Leaders offer a before-school breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

- 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 her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, and art and design. For each deep dive, she met with leaders, discussed curriculums, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of pupils' work. She also observed pupils from Year 1 to Year 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector considered other subjects on the school's curriculum. She talked to the leaders who lead these subjects. The inspector spoke to pupils about their learning in these subjects and looked at samples of work in these subjects.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, other leaders and staff.

- The inspector met with governors, including the co-chair of the governing body. She spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector spoke with different groups of pupils to gather their views on the school and held discussions about their behaviour and learning. She also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtime.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. She also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- The inspector met with those responsible for safeguarding at the school. She scrutinised a range of documents in relation to safeguarding. She also spoke with governors, staff, parents and pupils about safeguarding.
- The inspector considered a range of documents provided by school leaders and staff. These included the school's priority action plan, minutes of governing body meetings, headteacher reports and the leaders' self-evaluation document.

Inspection team

Louise McArdle, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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