

Inspection of a good school: Westwoodside Church of England Academy

Nethergate, Westwoodside, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN9 2DR

Inspection dates:

4–5 March 2020

Outcome

Westwoodside Church of England Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's Christian values, including respect, love and perseverance, are at the heart of pupils' experiences. Pupils are polite and considerate. Bullying is rare. Staff have high expectations of pupils. Pupils rise to these by behaving sensibly and working hard. They achieve well and are ready for the next stage of their education.

Leaders frequently gather pupils' opinions about aspects of the school's work. Pupils are empowered to influence decisions. For example, they have chosen to change the times of the school day to better support their learning. They also take on leadership roles. For example, they are keen to be sports ambassadors, reading buddies and office helpers. This level of responsibility makes them mature and reflective.

Pupils enjoy a variety of extra-curricular clubs. They also compete against pupils from other schools in sporting tournaments. Opportunities for pupils' spiritual development are strong. For example, pupils engage in worship and in special events at the church. This gives pupils the chance to think deeply about philosophical matters.

There is a strong sense of team work at the school. Leaders collaborate with staff on projects to improve pupils' education. Staff feel valued and supported. This emphasis on teamwork is then reflected by pupils who work and play cooperatively.

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

The new senior leadership team has started work on improving the curriculum. Pupils study a broad and interesting curriculum. Leaders are passionate about giving pupils rich first-hand experiences. Staff plan trips and visitors to support pupils' learning. Pupils enjoy cultural workshops, using artefacts and performing for audiences. Pupils in Year 6 were enthused by their recent science work, which involved dissecting a cow's respiratory system.

Leaders have made appropriate connections between subjects. This makes learning meaningful for pupils. Leaders have also mapped out how pupils' learning gets more complex as they move through the school. For example, in geography, teachers know what to expect of pupils' map and field work in each year group. Yet, within a topic, teachers do not have detailed guidance about the knowledge they should teach and the order to teach it in. This means that pupils do not consistently develop a deep knowledge of the subjects they study.

Leaders have developed a strong reading culture. Some pupils told me the best thing about their school was the 'amazing selection of books in the library'. Leaders aim to broaden pupils' reading experiences. They expose pupils to high-quality books and diverse authors. Each day, pupils read independently, listen to stories and discuss their reading. They develop a broad vocabulary and a secure understanding of books. Role models, including teachers, peers, visiting footballers and authors, give encouragement to reluctant readers.

Phonics teaching helps most pupils to become fluent in reading. Teachers check on whether pupils are remembering new phonics knowledge. Those who are struggling have extra sessions to help them. Some adults have considerable expertise in teaching early reading. Yet, others do not consistently use the strategies which leaders have chosen to support pupils. Also, the books pupils use to practise early reading sometimes contain sounds and words pupils do not know. These aspects hinder some pupils' confidence and fluency in learning to read.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit from bespoke learning plans. Teaching staff use the plans to tailor activities to meet pupils' needs. Teaching assistants provide effective support for those with complex needs. This enables pupils to be included in all aspects of school life. Staff gain expertise from the school's links with external specialists. Parents of pupils with SEND appreciate all that leaders and staff do to provide a good quality of education.

Leaders have developed the early years curriculum well. By the end of Reception, children are prepared for Year 1. In preparation for learning in geography, children learn about places which are relevant to them. For example, they record on a world map where relatives or familiar book characters are from. Children develop a love of learning and show high levels of concentration.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular training and updates about safeguarding risks. They are vigilant and are prompt in passing on any concerns they may have. Staff with designated responsibility for safeguarding communicate well with external agencies. They also keep thorough records of their work.

Appropriate checks are in place to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Governors have systems in place to make sure the culture of safeguarding is effective.

Pupils' social and emotional needs, including complex needs, are well supported. Families whose circumstances make them vulnerable receive appropriate help.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Phonics teaching is effective for most pupils. However, some adults are inconsistent in their use of the school's strategies to help pupils remember phonics knowledge. Also, the books pupils use to practise early reading are not precisely matched to the sounds and words they know. This hampers some pupils' confidence and their progress in learning to read fluently. Leaders should ensure that pupils practise their early reading with books which only contain the words and sounds they know. Leaders should also ensure that the strategies they have chosen to help pupils learn to read are used consistently by staff.
- The school's curriculum is not yet planned and sequenced in enough detail in some subjects. However, it is clear from leaders' actions that they are in the process of bringing this about. For this reason, the transition arrangements have been applied. Whole-school plans for subjects outside of English and mathematics, do not consistently offer teachers the guidance they need. Within a topic, plans do not give enough detail about which knowledge should be taught. Additionally, the sequence of learning is not clear in topic plans. Hence, pupils do not consistently develop a deep knowledge of all the subjects they study. Plans must be developed so that teachers are clear about what knowledge they need to teach and the order to teach it within each topic.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 21–22 June 2016.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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

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| Unique reference number | 138713 |
| Local authority | North Lincolnshire |
| Inspection number | 10121850 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 162 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of governing body | Maria Potter |
| Headteacher | Marc Grinhaff |
| Website | www.westwoodside.n-lincs.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 21–22 June 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The headteacher and members of the senior leadership team took up their posts in September 2019.
- The school is designated as having a Church of England character. It is part of the Diocese of Lincoln. The last section 48 inspection took place in November 2015.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is above average.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders. I met with members of staff and considered the 10 responses to Ofsted’s staff survey. I met with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body. I spoke on the telephone with a representative of the local authority.
- I observed pupils’ behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at playtime and lunchtime. I gathered pupils’ views about the school through formal and informal discussions. I considered the 24 responses to Ofsted’s pupil survey.

- I scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, records of the work of governors, as well as safeguarding documents. I evaluated information relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- I considered the 13 responses to Ofsted's parent questionnaire, Parent View, along with the eight free-text responses and one letter.
- I did deep dives in reading, mathematics and geography. In doing so, I visited every class, met with teachers and reviewed pupils' work. I spoke to pupils about their learning and listened to them read.

Inspection team

Karine Hendley, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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