

Inspection of Westwood First School

Westwood Road, Leek, Staffordshire ST13 8DL

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 September 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Adele Johnson. This school is part of The Talentum Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Ian Wilson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Patricia Fisher.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy and welcoming school where pupils love to learn. Staff nurture pupils' character and have high aspirations for them to achieve well. There is a real focus on the multi-academy trust's motto of 'be the best you can be'. Staff provide pupils with memorable learning experiences and opportunities. As a result, pupils develop as well-rounded individuals. Parents agree. One parent summed up the views of many when they said, 'My children are guided and encouraged by their teachers to become intelligent, kind, courteous and respectful children.'

Pupils enjoy school and feel safe. They develop positive relationships with adults and each other. Pupils behave well in lessons and at playtimes. They are kind, considerate and friendly to visitors. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Pupils are confident that staff will sort out any issues which occur quickly.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of enriching opportunities. These include visits to the theatre, to gardens and to several different museums. In addition, the school provides a number of clubs for pupils to attend, such as sports, choir and arts. Leaders have plans to develop the range of clubs offered further.

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

Children get off to a great start at Westwood First School. Staff are skilled at building on pre-school experiences and early skills, such as how to cooperate with each other. Staff quickly form positive and productive relationships with children. They know the children well and understand their individual needs. Adults create a learning environment which immerses children in language. Learning activities help children to practise and remember what they have learned over time.

The school has developed a well-sequenced curriculum, with early years as the starting point for all learning. Subject leaders have designed a clear plan for their subject curriculum, identifying the important knowledge and vocabulary that children are expected to learn across each year group and through the school. Staff use these plans as a basis to plan activities. However, sometimes the activities that staff plan do not support the intended knowledge. When this happens, pupils do not learn as well as they could.

Reading is at the centre of the curriculum. Staff read stories regularly to pupils in order to engage them and enhance their learning. Staff have all received training in the teaching of early reading, and lessons focus closely on learning and practising the sounds that pupils need to know. However, some of the books that pupils read are not as closely matched to the sounds pupils need to learn. As a result, some pupils do not practise and remember these sounds as well as they could.

Pupils concentrate and work hard in lessons because teachers make learning interesting. They enjoy earning 'merit points' when they are successful. Teachers

assess what pupils have learned and use this information well to modify, consolidate and develop pupils' learning.

The school makes sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly. The SEND coordinator ensures that staff and parents are clear about the extra support a pupil may need. As a result, teachers make suitable adaptations so that all pupils with SEND can join in lessons and learn the curriculum.

Pupils are very accepting and respectful of others. They talk about human rights and demonstrate an awareness of global issues. Through the curriculum, as well as through assemblies and theme days, pupils have very effective opportunities to develop their awareness of fundamental British values. Pupils have opportunities to promote their confidence and sense of responsibility. For instance, some pupils act as 'playground buddies' and 'arts ambassadors'. Pupils take pride in their work, and take these duties seriously.

The multi-academy trust knows the school very well. It provides effective support to governors in order for them to carry out their role. Staff work collaboratively with colleagues across the trust in a variety of ways. This helps to share expertise and develop many aspects of the school's work.

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 that pupils at the early stage of reading consistently read books that match the sounds they are learning. This means that some pupils do not get enough practice of these sounds. The school should ensure that the books pupils read are closely matched to the sounds they are learning.
- In a small number of subjects, not all activities planned by teachers enable pupils to learn the intended curriculum. This slows pupils' learning. Leaders should develop staff's expertise in how to plan activities that support pupils to remember more across the curriculum.

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	146623
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10285054
Type of school	First
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	277
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Patricia Fisher
Headteacher	Adele Johnson
Website	http://wfs.ttlit.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	2 November 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, Westwood First School has become a part of The Talentum Learning Trust, a multi-academy trust. It converted to become an academy in April 2019.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 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. The 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, the lead inspector held meetings with the headteacher. He also met four members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.

He met with four members of the multi-academy trust, including the chair of the trust.

- 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.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, English, mathematics, history and art and design. They met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and viewed examples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work from science, geography and design and technology.
- An inspector observed children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 read to a trusted adult.
- The inspectors spoke with members of staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- The inspectors considered the responses, including the free-text comments, to Ofsted Parent View. They also considered the responses to the staff and pupil surveys. Inspectors spoke to parents at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation, school improvement priorities, school policies, curriculum documents, SEND records, behaviour records, attendance records and minutes of meetings held by the governing body and trust board.

Inspection team

Barry Yeadsley, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Adam Montague-Clewes	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Ray	Ofsted Inspector

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