

Inspection of Westhouses Primary School

Bolden Terrace, Westhouses, Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 5AF

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 September 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend this warm and welcoming school. They were keen to tell inspectors that they are all part of the 'Westhouses family'. As one pupil, typical of many, told inspectors, 'Whenever I am here, I always feel safe'.

Pupils behave well. They know what bullying is and what to do if it ever occurred. Classrooms are calm places in which to learn. The playground is a friendly and active area for pupils to spend time. 'Mini Leaders' provide daily activities for the pupils to keep fit. There are many opportunities to take part in local sports events too. The 'Westhouses Wellies' enjoy growing pumpkins, beans and tomatoes on their allotment next door to the school.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils. Pupils understand the school's values. They know the importance of determination, respect, passion, honesty, resilience, teamwork and self-belief.

Parents and carers appreciate the hard work of the staff team. They value the care given to their children and the regular communication they receive. One parent, who summed up the feelings of many, said, 'All the staff at Westhouses school work so hard to ensure the best learning environment. My child feels safe and supported; he is happy to go to school and enjoys his time there'.

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

The curriculum at Westhouses is ambitious and well organised. Leaders are clear about what pupils need to learn as they move through the school. Subject plans set out the knowledge and skills to be taught in small steps and in a logical order. Building pupils' vocabulary is important at Westhouses. 'Vocabulary Pyramids' contain the words that are to be learned in each topic. Pupils talk about what they know in a precise way. In science, for example, older pupils shared their understanding of the cardiovascular system using words such as 'circulation', 'transportation' and 'osmosis'.

Leaders and governors have high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers adapt the curriculum wherever they need to so that pupils with SEND are fully included in all parts of the curriculum.

Learning to read starts as soon as the Reception year begins. Staff in the early years ensure that children develop their language skills by taking part in conversations, singing songs and joining in with nursery rhymes. Leaders have made sure that phonics is taught consistently well throughout the school. The books that pupils read at home are closely matched to the letter sounds they know. Older pupils know how their daily reading sessions are helping them to improve their fluency, expression and understanding.

Teachers check how well pupils are progressing in lessons. They swiftly provide support to help pupils keep up if it is needed. Teachers make time to review what pupils are learning so it remains fresh in their mind. However, in some subjects, teachers do not make precise connections to the knowledge and skills gained in previous years. This means that some pupils find it difficult to recall their learning from the past. It also means that pupils do not always make best use of their learning by linking what they are doing now to what they already know.

Pupils are polite and confident. They display positive attitudes towards their learning and each other. Leaders keep a close eye on any pupil absence. They respond quickly to address instances of low attendance when this is needed. The importance of attending school as much as possible is regularly explained in the school's newsletters.

There are lots of additional responsibilities for pupils to carry out. Mental health and well-being ambassadors lead assemblies and offer support for others. The 'Pupil Voice' has a say on many issues, such as the school's anti-bullying policy. Pupils learn about other faiths and cultures. However, their knowledge of equality is limited. This means they are not as prepared for living in modern Britain as they could be.

Governors have a clear vision for the school. They understand their roles well. They know what is working well and what they want to work on next. Consideration is given to the workload and well-being of staff. Leaders provide the time and support staff need to carry out all the responsibilities they share in a small school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is a priority at Westhouses. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained. Safeguarding updates are part of weekly staff meetings. This means that staff know what to look out for and what to do if they are worried about a pupil's welfare. Leaders quickly respond to any concerns that are raised. They take appropriate action to get pupils the support they need. Record-keeping is thorough. Governors frequently check on the school's systems for safeguarding. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online and in the community. They know that they can go to adults in school if they have a problem.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers do not make precise links to the knowledge and skills pupils have gained in previous years. This means that some pupils cannot readily recall learning from the past or systematically build on what they already know to deepen their understanding. Leaders must review their systems so that teachers help pupils to make connections between current learning and previous learning, helping them to remember more and deepen their understanding.
- While pupils have respectful and tolerant attitudes, they do not have sufficient knowledge of the protected characteristics. Leaders, including those responsible for governance, must ensure that pupils develop an age-appropriate knowledge of the protected characteristics, so they have a deeper understanding of equality.

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	112508
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10241094
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	69
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Simon Taylor
Headteacher	Juliette Whitby
Website	www.westhouses.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 and 7 February 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, science and history. For the deep dives, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to subject leaders, looked at subject plans and viewed pupils' work for art and physical education.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, curriculum leaders and a sample of teaching and support staff. Inspectors met with the leaders responsible for the

early years, pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils, behaviour, attendance and personal development.

- The lead inspector met with the designated leader for safeguarding to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. The lead inspector reviewed a range of documents, including the school's single central record.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans, records of governance, and documentation relating to attendance and pupils' behaviour.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 read to a familiar adult. Inspectors met with groups of pupils from across the school.
- The lead inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. He also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the results of the Ofsted staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Shaun Carter, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Hazel Henson

His Majesty's Inspector

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