

Weston Junior Academy

Address: Princess Drive, Weston Coyney, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST3 6NG

Unique reference number (URN): 143356

Inspection report: 19 May 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Overall, across the curriculum, pupils gain a body of knowledge that prepares them well for secondary school. Typically, pupils secure key building blocks for learning in English and mathematics. Pupils learn important number knowledge that enables them to calculate, reason and problem-solve. Leaders' recent work on making sure that pupils develop key multiplication skills by Year 4 is starting to bear fruit. Pupils are receiving appropriate support to build their number fluency. For the most part, pupils gain knowledge in reading and writing that enables them to tackle more complex tasks when they are older. Staff revisit prior learning, which helps pupils consolidate and connect knowledge across subjects.

In Year 6 national tests, pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, generally achieve well. However, at times, the checks on pupils' learning are not as effective as they could be. This means some pupils do not deepen their learning as well as they might.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders and governors prioritise attendance. Recent work on attendance has had a positive impact. More pupils attend school regularly. Overall, attendance is now similar to other schools nationally. This is because leaders analyse attendance figures closely and respond to any identified issues. For example, providing curriculum enrichment activities at the end of the autumn term has successfully addressed a historical dip in attendance at this time. Leaders also work collaboratively with families to build trusting relationships that develop engagement and prioritise attendance. Parents understand the value of their children being in school and the support that leaders can offer.

Overall, pupils behave well in lessons and focus on the task at hand. Pupils are kind and polite. They cooperate and play together well at social times. The provision of more outdoor resources has significantly reduced incidents of poor behaviour at playtimes. Leaders have developed a culture focused on understanding the reasons behind pupils' behaviour. High behaviour expectations are set through shared values. Pupils demonstrate understanding for each other, and this helps them to navigate conflict. This builds resilience for the future. Incidents of bullying or discriminatory behaviour are dealt with swiftly. Leaders ensure that pupils learn why this behaviour is never acceptable.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders, with the support of the trust, have constructed a suitably well sequenced curriculum. It identifies the important knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn over time. Staff typically deliver the curriculum as intended, particularly in foundation subjects such as history and geography. However, in English and mathematics, a small number of staff do not deliver the curriculum as well as leaders intend.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) needs are usually well catered for. Staff provide sensitive support so that pupils with SEND fully access the whole curriculum successfully.

In English, pupils learn to develop a love of reading. When needed, staff help pupils to secure important phonics knowledge. Staff deliver the writing curriculum generally well. However, some staff do not consistently ensure that pupils secure key handwriting, spelling and punctuation skills before moving on to more complex pieces.

Staff carry out regular checks of pupils' learning to identify and address gaps over time. However, this practice is not consistent. At times, staff do not check pupils' learning closely enough during lessons. This means they miss opportunities to extend and deepen pupils' understanding.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Inclusion and equity are visible in everyday school life. Staff quickly identify pupils' specific needs, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils' needs are often known before they start school in Year 3 due to effective liaison with the linked infant school.

Staff make thoughtful adaptations to teaching, routines and environments so that pupils participate successfully in school life. This includes well-targeted use of additional adults, practical resources and bespoke provision where needed. Clear systems ensure that pupils receive timely support. Staff remove barriers to learning effectively. This enables pupils to access the full curriculum alongside their peers.

Leaders know that pupils with SEND make progress through the use of effective online systems and 'pupil passports'. However, some targets for pupils in these passports are too general and are not as sharply focused as they could be. In these cases, it is more difficult for leaders to be sure that pupils with SEND are making the best possible progress.

Leaders use funding for disadvantaged pupils effectively to support academic progress, wellbeing and engagement. Leaders provide appropriate support for pupils who are known or previously known to social care or who are young carers. This support enables these pupils to engage and learn well.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have a firm understanding of the school's context. They foster a sense of community. Leaders know pupils and families well and build positive relationships from the outset. This enables pupils to succeed. Leaders work effectively with external agencies and other schools within their trust. This provides additional capacity and support. The collaboration between the trust and school leaders is very positive.

Leaders know the school's strengths and the areas that need to be prioritised. As a result, they address these priorities effectively. For example, actions to improve attendance and behaviour have had a significant impact. Leaders recognise where the impact of recent actions has yet to be fully realised and where there is more work to do.

The trust and governors assure themselves that leaders' understanding of the school is accurate. They provide challenge and support through constructive discussions and activities. Professional learning is well considered for all staff. Leaders ensure that staff

benefit further from working in partnership with other local schools within the trust. This includes engagement with high-quality research aligned to the school's priorities.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They value the actions leaders take to reduce workload and promote wellbeing. An open culture exists in the school, where staff feel safe to share their views. One comment from a member of staff summed up the views of many when they stated, 'Management are kind and approachable and give you a safe place to discuss ideas.'

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have constructed a personal development programme that is tailored to meet the needs of pupils who live in the local area. For example, in personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education there is a focus on ensuring that pupils learn about how to use social media safely and gain an understanding of criminal behaviour and how to recognise unhealthy relationships. Across PSHE, pupils develop a solid understanding of how to work within a budget, what makes a good friendship and how to identify and address safety and risk across a range of contexts. In relationships, health and sex education, pupils learn about the body changes that happen as they grow up. Leaders support pupils to 'be themselves'. If pupils need specific support with regards to their mental health and wellbeing, leaders ensure that professional support is provided for both these pupils and their families. The provision for these pupils is effective.

Pupils are tolerant of different faiths, cultures and relationships. They say 'it's okay to be different'. Pupils gain a broad understanding of the different religions in today's society. They experience democracy by voting for activities and engaging in the 'Trust Pupil Parliament'.

Leaders provide a range of engaging extra-curricular activities such as gardening, choir, arts and sporting clubs. These are changed regularly so there is something for everyone. Vulnerable pupils participate fully in this provision. In addition, leaders provide engaging activities for pupils, such as LEGO workshops, making Christmas crafts and a visiting menagerie. Pupils are given opportunities to lead as school councillors or ambassadors. They support the school's work well.

Overall, leaders have effective oversight of the provision for pupils' personal development and wellbeing. This ensures that the needs of all pupils are considered and that no one misses out.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils at this school say it is a place 'where we grow'. They live by this motto and grow academically, personally and socially. Leaders have suitably high aspirations for pupils, and largely they rise to these. Overall, pupils make progress and learn well. Leaders are adept at identifying any barriers to learning that pupils may face. Staff provide suitable support in order for pupils to overcome these barriers. Pupils typically engage well and gain a body of knowledge that prepares them well for secondary school.

At the heart of the school's work are its 'Weston Values'. Pupils say, 'They help us live our lives.' For example, they speak confidently about 'empathy and respect', 'neighbourhood and community' and 'openness and honesty'. It is because these values are well understood that pupils behave well in class, around the school and at social times. Any issues regarding poor behaviour or bullying are quickly sorted. Parents spoken to agree. One comment was typical of many when they stated, 'Staff reassure you by sorting out any problems you might have quickly.'

Pupils are safe and learn how to stay safe. This includes being safe in the local area regarding road and water safety. Leaders work diligently to ensure that pupils have positive attendance. As a result, more pupils are attending more regularly than in previous years.

Leaders are aspirational for pupils in later life. They have developed effective links with local colleges and a university to do this. Leaders make sure that pupils have tangible experiences that enable them to engage in learning. For example, pupils talk about how a visit to a local museum has enabled them to understand the use of aircraft in the Second World War.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that staff deliver the curriculum consistently well in English and mathematics, including checking pupils' understanding during lessons and securing key foundational skills in writing so that pupils can deepen their knowledge and achieve as well as they should.
 - Leaders should make sure that specific targets set for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are sharply focused to secure the best possible outcomes.
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About this inspection

This school is part of the St Bart's Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Lisa Sarikaya, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Johnny Anderson.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with school leaders, including the principal, vice-principal and other leaders, during the inspection. The lead inspector spoke with trustees and members of the local governing committee, including the chair of the trust. The lead inspector held a meeting with the CEO and director of education of the trust.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school uses no alternative provision.

Principal: Julie Birchall

Lead inspector:

Barry Yeardsley, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Richard Kentish, Ofsted Inspector

Steph Withington, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 19 May 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

181

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

240

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

29.83%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

1.66%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

17.13%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Close to average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	60%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	59%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	63%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	57%	60%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	69%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	68%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	75%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	65%	73%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	78%	72%	Above
2024/25 (final)	82%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	77%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	76%	71%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	71%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	66%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	73%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	73%	73%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	44%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	40%	47%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	44%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	47%	44%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	53%	62%	Below
2024/25 (final)	50%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	50%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	58%	60%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	71%	59%	Above
2024/25 (final)	75%	59%	Above
2023/24 (final)	63%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	74%	58%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	62%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	55%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	63%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	68%	59%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	44%	68%	-24 pp
2024/25 (final)	40%	69%	-29 pp
2023/24 (final)	44%	67%	-24 pp
2022/23 (final)	47%	66%	-19 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	53%	80%	-27 pp
2024/25 (final)	50%	81%	-31 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	80%	-30 pp
2022/23 (final)	58%	78%	-20 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	71%	78%	-7 pp
2024/25 (final)	75%	78%	-3 pp
2023/24 (final)	63%	78%	-15 pp
2022/23 (final)	74%	77%	-4 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	62%	80%	-18 pp
2024/25 (final)	55%	81%	-26 pp
2023/24 (final)	63%	79%	-17 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	68%	79%	-11 pp

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	6.6%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	5.8%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.5%	5.9%	Close to average

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	15.6%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	14.6%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	14.3%	16.2%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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