

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: West Lynn Primary School

St Peter's Road, West Lynn, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3JL

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 October 2024

Outcome

West Lynn Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The executive headteacher of this school is Joanne Borley, who also holds responsibility for two other trust primary schools. This school is part of West Norfolk Academies 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), Andrew Johnson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Roger Livesey.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy, confident and enjoy their learning. They know how to keep themselves safe and have trusted adults to turn to. Pupils know how to make and maintain friendships. They play well together on the playground and school field. Pupils enjoy a curriculum enhanced by visits, visitors and experiences. During the inspection, a published author shared his journey to becoming a writer. Pupils responded enthusiastically to hearing him read his stories.

The school has a well-sequenced English and mathematics curriculum that helps pupils learn to read and develop their mathematical knowledge. Basic skills in phonics are taught systematically. Pupils enjoy daily sessions that build on and consolidate prior knowledge. Staff are ambitious for their pupils. Pupils enjoy the challenge tasks they can move on to after completing the main learning activity. Some would benefit from moving on to these activities sooner. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported with additional scaffolds, prompts and adult input.

The wider curriculum is interesting and broad. Latin is taught, and enjoyed by pupils, being the basis for several modern foreign languages. Opportunities to take up a musical instrument are offered. The school provides a wide range of after-school clubs that are well attended and enable pupils to develop their interests.

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

School and trust leaders carefully check the impact of the school's curriculum. Trust-wide guidance and training support teachers with workload and ensure consistency. Teaching and learning are regularly reviewed. Leaders are outward-looking, keen for ways to improve further. There is a strong sense of 'team' within the school and the trust.

Pupils with SEND have their needs identified quickly and are supported effectively to access the curriculum and achieve well. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Support staff are well trained and work effectively with class teachers. Sometimes, teaching activities do not enable pupils who have a secure understanding to move on to learning new knowledge quickly. Some pupils do not get opportunities to use what they know in different contexts. They find the work too easy and finish tasks quickly. This means that they do not always get to apply their knowledge to the depth they are capable of.

Reading is prioritised. Pupils have a positive and enthusiastic attitude to reading. Daily phonics and reading sessions ensure that pupils gain the knowledge and skills to succeed. Anyone falling behind is targeted with helpful support and practice so that they can catch up. Stories are shared regularly and the library is resourced with high-quality books. Mathematics is taught in a way that ensures consistency, including pupils' development of mathematical language and concepts. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes and confidence towards mathematics.

The wider curriculum includes music, art and languages alongside subjects such as science, history and geography. All are taught in an interesting and engaging way. This helps pupils to make strong progress through the curriculum. All pupils can participate through support or adjustments if needed. This ensures that they learn well. Handwriting and letter formation, punctuation and presentation are systematically taught. However, some teachers do not have the same high expectations of these aspects of pupils' work as others. Some pupils do not get opportunities to practise using their writing knowledge in the wider curriculum. This detracts from the quality of pupils' written work.

The school gives attendance and punctuality a high focus. Both have improved. Staff, including those in the office, are proactive and supportive. The importance of good attendance is highlighted through assemblies, posters and the school website. Behaviour and conduct in lessons, around school and at breaktimes are orderly. Pupils know the school's expectations and respond accordingly.

The school's provision for pupils' wider development is notable. Enhancements to the curriculum, such as participation in national partnerships and visits to the Houses of Parliament, broaden pupils' experiences. The school is proactive in sourcing links, trips and events to enhance learning. These include hosting mental health awareness days and cultural diversity events. Life skills are taught incrementally. These include using cutlery and managing money. Pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education and life outside of school.

The Reception class includes engaging indoor and outdoor areas. Children learn basic skills, including phonics, reading and early mathematics. Plentiful opportunities to practise these skills are provided. School routines are introduced sensitively by staff, who encourage children's independence. Children learn to make selections from a range of carefully designed activities which target key areas of learning and development.

The school has addressed the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection effectively. School and trust leaders work closely together in the best interests of their pupils. All staff are committed to improvement. Governors and trustees bring a range of useful experience to their roles. They know the school well and provide appropriate, effective support and challenge.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils do not move on to more complex learning or apply their knowledge in different contexts when they are ready to do so. This slows pupils' progress through the curriculum and their learning of more complex concepts, so some pupils do not achieve as highly as they could. The school should ensure that activities support pupils' learning effectively and that pupils move on to learning more complex knowledge, or applying knowledge in different contexts, when they are ready to do so to ensure pupils achieve as well as they can.
- The expectations of the quality of pupils' written work are variable. Some pupils do not get opportunities to practise and develop handwriting and punctuation and so do not secure important foundational writing knowledge. The quality of pupils' written work does not always reflect what some pupils are capable of. The school should ensure that all teachers have the same high expectations of letter formation, letter orientation, handwriting, punctuation and presentation and provide opportunities for pupils to practise applying this knowledge.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in September 2019.

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	141168
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10345397
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	158
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Roger Livesey
CEO of the trust	Andrew Johnson
Headteacher	Joanne Burley
Website	www.westlynn.norfolk.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	17 and 18 September 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the West Norfolk Academies Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with leaders from both the school and the trust. This included the executive headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. The inspector also spoke to representatives of the trust, including the CEO, the deputy CEO and some members of the board of trustees.

- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work in several subjects, including English and mathematics.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.
- Responses to Ofsted Parent View and Ofsted's staff questionnaire were considered by the inspector. The executive headteacher shared the responses from a recent pupil survey with the inspector.

Inspection team

Jacqueline Bell-Cook, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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