

Westgate Hill Primary Academy

Address: Beaconsfield Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE4 5JN

Unique reference number (URN): 144970

Inspection report: 21 April 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.

Exceptional

Inclusion

Exceptional 

The approach to inclusion is of the highest possible quality. Staff hold consistently high expectations for pupils who face barriers to learning or wellbeing. From the moment pupils join, needs are identified quickly and addressed through bespoke programmes that enable pupils to flourish.

Staff are skilled in reducing barriers to learning. For example, new pupils who have recently arrived in the United Kingdom benefit from the highly effective 'Welcome Project'. These pupils are taught useful phrases and vocabulary to help them settle quickly, build friendships and get started on securing the knowledge they need in English and mathematics.

Leaders check pupils' progress and the impact of support rigorously. They refine individual pupil plans regularly to accelerate and maximise outcomes. Parents and carers speak enthusiastically about the positive difference this support makes to their children's lives.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from carefully chosen adaptations that are seamlessly embedded in lessons. These include precise and repetitive use of key vocabulary and targeted pre-teaching to strengthen links to prior learning. Pupils become increasingly independent, for example through the effective use of digital technology to translate or repeat instructions. Pupils with high levels of need receive bespoke support in the 'Hub' and 'Treehouse', where they excel. Over time, they are supported to re-engage successfully into mainstream classes.

Leaders' use of additional funding is superb. Strategic use of the pupil premium funding ensures that disadvantaged pupils have every possible opportunity to thrive academically, socially and personally. As a result, pupils benefit from an extensive range of life-enhancing experiences. These include opportunities to perform and excel beyond the classroom, such as a pupil recently reciting their prize-winning poem on stage at the Globe Theatre.

Strong standard

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard 

Leaders foster a sense of belonging in the school. Pupils love coming to school and they attend well. Embedded systems enable leaders to identify patterns of absence and act quickly when concerns arise. They work proactively to support families and remove any barriers that may prevent pupils from attending school regularly. The importance of school attendance is consistently promoted to pupils and their parents and carers. Overall, attendance for pupils who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. Leaders have taken steps to reduce term-time holidays to further reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent.

Pupils manage their behaviour extremely well inside classrooms and in the playground. Pupils happily play together. They warmly welcome new pupils into the school, relishing the

opportunities to help them to learn English and make friends. Routines are clearly established from the early years. Pupils of all ages enter school and quickly settle into activities with minimal reminders from staff. They cooperate with staff and with each other, for example, by taking turns when contributing to discussions. Older pupils provide excellent role models for younger pupils. On the rare occasion that pupils are unkind to each other, it is swiftly and effectively dealt with by staff.

Early years

Strong standard 

Children in the early years get off to a flying start. They benefit from highly skilled and committed staff who build warm, supportive relationships. Leaders have high expectations for all children. Children rapidly gain independence. For example, all children, including the very youngest, take responsibility for hanging up their coats, self-registering and using the toilet. They cooperate with one another and show respect for staff and each other.

Leaders have precisely planned the essential knowledge, stories, rhymes and vocabulary they want children to learn. Staff create purposeful environments where children engage with well-planned activities that are suitably challenging and wide ranging.

High-quality interactions with staff develop children's speech, language and communication throughout the provision. Conversations are also used to deepen children's understanding of recent learning. Staff skilfully draw in children who are reluctant to engage.

Reading is prioritised right from the start. Children begin learning initial sounds early and, by the time they reach the Reception Year, are well prepared to read and write through highly effective phonics teaching. They have frequent opportunities to apply their phonics, early writing and number skills across the provision. Staff carefully assess children's needs and reduce any barriers to learning effectively. They provide a comprehensive range of timely support, which helps children catch up. As a result, children make rapid progress from their starting points.

The school does all it can to engage parents and carers. For example, technology is used to translate conversations, and families receive helpful guidance to support learning at home.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard 

Leaders and those responsible for governance have an in-depth understanding of the school's context. They accurately identify priorities for improvement. Leaders at all levels are determined and committed to making a positive contribution to improving the school.

Trustees and the local governance committee rigorously hold school leaders to account, ensuring that actions taken are both timely and highly effective. Governors are knowledgeable about their areas and regularly check the impact of leaders' actions. Those responsible for governance gain the detailed knowledge they need to fulfil their statutory duties.

Leaders prioritise the needs of pupils who are disadvantaged. These pupils make excellent progress from their starting points. The additional funding for these pupils is used

exceptionally well and highly benefits pupils. Leaders carefully consider the allocation of resources in shaping the curriculum and developing innovative approaches to teaching.

Staff, including those who recently qualified, feel very well supported. They love working at this remarkable school. Staff have a shared vision and commitment to transform the lives of pupils. They benefit from a carefully planned, appropriate, evidence-informed programme of professional development. Leaders are considerate of staff workload and wellbeing.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They are well informed about their children's progress and feel their needs are extremely well met.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

The personal development programme is carefully considered to ensure that it meets the needs of the diverse community the school serves. Links with external agencies, such as the local police and national charities, help make the programme engaging, relevant and contemporary.

Leaders are rightly proud of the enrichment offer. Every pupil benefits from high-quality music lessons, broadening their cultural and creative experiences. A wide range of after-school clubs enables pupils to explore interests in sport, the arts and beyond. Partnerships with organisations such as the city's football club provide pupils with unique opportunities to develop their talents and aspirations. Pupils develop a sense of responsibility through meaningful leadership roles, including the 'mini-police', eco club and school council. They take these roles seriously. Pupils are encouraged to contribute positively to the local community. For example, pupils regularly take part in litter-picking initiatives. Leaders keep a close eye on pupils' engagement in enrichment activities. They ensure that all pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged, engage fully in the wider life of the school.

Leaders meticulously plan a programme of events to challenge stereotypes prevalent in the community. Consequently, pupils have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the protected characteristics and fundamental British values. Pupils consistently model tolerance, the rule of law and respect.

The personal, social, health and education curriculum ensures that pupils are taught how to keep their minds and bodies healthy. They also learn, at an appropriate time, what happens to their bodies during puberty and how to recognise healthy relationships. Pupils know how to keep safe online and in the community.

Pastoral support is highly effective. Staff respond promptly to emerging concerns, and parents and carers are well supported to ensure a consistent approach to pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs. This support is highly valued and has a clear impact on pupils' wellbeing and engagement, helping to minimise barriers to attendance.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, typically secure the knowledge they need to be ready for their next stage of education. Pupils make accelerated progress from their starting points, despite the significant barriers that some pupils face. Pupils' achievement in national tests is close to average for most measures. Recent actions by leaders to improve the teaching of reading in key stage 2 have led to a continued improvement in outcomes. The teaching of reading through the school's chosen phonics scheme has been strengthened. As a result, younger pupils and those who join school with no prior knowledge of English rapidly catch up in their reading and writing from different starting points. Pupils typically make secure progress across the curriculum. However, in some subjects, such as geography, teaching does not consistently support pupils to recall detailed knowledge from previous learning.

Younger pupils secure accuracy in spelling, reading, handwriting and number facts. However, this is less consistent as pupils progress through school, where there is variability in pupils' number formation, use of capital letters and punctuation.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have planned an ambitious curriculum to build knowledge and skills over time. This includes opportunities for pupils to revisit their learning regularly. Staff encourage pupils to explain their learning with increasing confidence and clarity. Teachers use a structured approach that supports pupils to work independently.

The youngest pupils receive precise teaching that helps them acquire the skills they need to read, write and be numerate. Typically, teachers carefully check pupils' understanding to identify gaps in learning and adjust their teaching to address these effectively. However, there is some inconsistency, where opportunities to address misconceptions in mathematics are sometimes missed. This means that pupils' understanding is sometimes less secure. A recent focus on improving pupils' handwriting, spelling and grammar is having a positive impact. However, some older pupils are inconsistent in their use of capital letters and in forming numbers correctly.

Staff, including those in the early stages of their careers, receive an extensive, research-based programme of professional development to further develop their subject knowledge and teaching expertise.

Leaders and staff identify pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who have not secured important foundations in communication and language, reading, spelling, handwriting and mathematics. A range of highly effective support is in place so pupils can catch up with their peers.

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

Westgate Hill is an exceptionally inclusive school. Over time, the school's approach to supporting the most vulnerable pupils has been, and continues to be, highly commendable. Pupils' diverse backgrounds are embraced and celebrated by all. Pupils love their time at school. This is particularly the case for those who face barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing. Their wide range of needs is met remarkably well by highly committed and skilled staff. Pupils feel welcome and have an extraordinary sense of belonging.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary, both inside and outside the classroom. Bullying rarely happens, and staff deal with any issues swiftly. Pupils show high levels of respect to staff, school visitors and each other. One pupil summed up the ethos of the school by saying, 'It does not matter what religion you are, or where you are from, what matters is how kind you are.' Pupils typically attend school regularly and understand why regular attendance matters. Pupils feel safe in school. They also understand how to keep themselves safe outside school, including when online and in the community. Pupils enjoy a curriculum that is enriched by a comprehensive programme of educational visits and visitors. They also enjoy a range of after-school clubs, peripatetic music lessons and opportunities to take on varied leadership roles.

Pupils have a thirst for knowledge and enjoy all aspects of school life. Children in the early years get off to a fantastic start. They benefit from an extensive, well-resourced provision and staff who have in-depth knowledge of their needs. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive exceptionally high levels of support that enable them to make impressive progress from their varied starting points. Leaders have high expectations of all pupils. As a result, pupils with SEND, those who are disadvantaged and those known or previously known to children's social care thrive and are well prepared for their next steps.

Next steps

- Leaders should further strengthen the use of assessment, particularly in mathematics, to more precisely identify misconceptions and gaps in knowledge so that they can be closed quickly.
 - Leaders should embed improvements in pupils' foundational knowledge in key stage 2, particularly in number formation, capital letters and punctuation.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers further support pupils in acquiring and retaining detailed knowledge and skills across foundation subjects.
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About this inspection

This school is part of The Laidlaw Schools 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), Sally Newton, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Susanna Kempe.

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 the headteachers, deputy headteachers, other senior leaders, the CEO, trustees, including the chair, governors from the local governing committee, including the chair, some parents and carers and pupils during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not use any alternative provision.

Co-headteachers: Karl Ellerbrook and Nick Watson

Lead inspector:

Nicky White, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Mark Dent, Ofsted Inspector

Gill McCleave, Ofsted Inspector

Samuel Donaldson, Ofsted Inspector

Catherine Lee, 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 21 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

801

Well above 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

704

Well above 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)

44.05%

Well above 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

1.62%

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

15.36%

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

Well above 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	53%	61%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	54%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	54%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	51%	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	63%	74%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	68%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	63%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	57%	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	70%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	71%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	70%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	68%	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	68%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	67%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	66%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	71%	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	46%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	47%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	46%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	45%	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	57%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	62%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	56%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	51%	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	64%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	68%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	61%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	60%	58%	Close to average

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	59%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	59%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	54%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	64%	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	46%	68%	-21 pp
2024/25 (revised)	47%	69%	-22 pp
2023/24 (final)	46%	67%	-21 pp
2022/23 (final)	45%	66%	-21 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	57%	80%	-23 pp
2024/25 (revised)	62%	81%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	56%	80%	-24 pp
2022/23 (final)	51%	78%	-27 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	64%	78%	-14 pp
2024/25 (revised)	68%	78%	-10 pp
2023/24 (final)	61%	78%	-17 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	60%	77%	-17 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	59%	80%	-20 pp
2024/25 (revised)	59%	81%	-21 pp
2023/24 (final)	54%	79%	-26 pp
2022/23 (final)	64%	79%	-16 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 (2 term)	5.3%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.6%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	6.6%	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 (2 term)	14.7%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	18.7%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	21.9%	16.2%	Above

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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