

Westwood Academy

Middleton Road, Oldham, Greater Manchester, OL9 6BH

Inspection dates

4–5 October 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The principal and senior leadership team provide exceptional leadership. Together with the trustees, they make sure that all staff have the same high expectations for the pupils' success. The school has improved significantly. However, some aspects of middle leadership are not yet as effective. Senior leaders have plans in place to resolve these differences.
- Leaders are vigorous in pursuit of improvements and are fully committed to developing teaching further so that all pupils reach their full potential. The monitoring and assessment of progress is thorough and accurate.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. They are passionate about their teaching and provide well-planned lessons which enthuse the pupils, who make at least good progress. Some pupils make very rapid progress.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics surpass national averages by a significant margin by the time pupils have reached the end of key stage 2. Pupils make outstanding progress from their starting points.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities make similar progress to that of other pupils with the same starting points. Support for all pupils is effective and meets their needs.
- A focus on developing speaking and listening is successful. Pupils articulate their thoughts and develop their vocabulary well.
- Pupils are confident, have excellent attitudes to learning and are proud of their school. Parents, pupils and staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural learning are plentiful. Extra-curricular activities are varied and popular.
- School leaders make sure that arrangements to keep pupils safe are thorough and effective.
- The school is a happy learning environment that meets the social, emotional and academic needs of the pupils. Staff and pupils work hard together to ensure that outstanding standards of behaviour are maintained around the school.
- Children make a good start in the nursery, where there are exciting activities that have an emphasis on developing skills, number and language. However, in Reception, there is a need to rapidly develop outdoor provision further to provide a more challenging and stimulating learning environment.
- Actions taken by leaders to improve attendance have had a strong impact. However, a few pupils are still not attending regularly.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop teaching, learning and assessment in early years to ensure that a higher proportion of children reach a good level of development by:
 - enabling middle leaders to bring about the changes needed to provide a high-quality learning environment for the Reception class
 - ensuring that teachers plan lessons which challenge children to excel and move progress rapidly.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership in the school by further developing the middle leadership team.
- Continue to work closely with families to reduce further the small number of pupils who do not attend school regularly.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal communicates his clear ideas about how to improve the school. The senior leadership team support the principal strongly. The shared ambition of leaders, staff and trust board members has prompted much improvement at the school.
- The senior leadership team has high expectations of staff and pupils. They are unwaveringly committed to ensuring that every pupil who arrives at Westwood is given every possible opportunity to succeed. There are positive relationships and an ethos of respect and tolerance across the school.
- Senior leadership is very effective. Plans are in place to further develop the skills of the middle leaders, particularly those who are new to their posts. Performance management is used well to hold leaders and teachers to account and to further their development through well-focused professional development opportunities.
- There is a strong team of staff working with the local community, which has had a big impact on improving attendance and reducing persistent absence. This team continues to bring to bear all available strategies to continue to improve the regular attendance of pupils, particularly those who take extended leave to visit home countries.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The curriculum is planned to take account of pupils' interests and to broaden their experiences and knowledge. The curriculum helps pupils to understand and appreciate the wide range of different cultural influences that have shaped their heritage and to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Recent events, such as the Manchester Arena bombing, have been covered with sensitivity.
- Leaders have created very detailed plans which underpin the improvement in teaching and curriculum development. This focus on improvement is bringing about rapid change across the whole school. Improvement plans are carefully monitored, with the findings used to inform future planning.
- Teachers are encouraged by leaders to develop new links between different subjects. They know where their teaching strengths lie and work together to improve on areas of weakness. Because of this, pupils have access to a rich and interesting range of lessons and extra-curricular activities.
- Additional funding, including the pupil premium grant, the physical education and sport premium and special educational needs funding, is used effectively. Careful plans ensure that this funding is used to help pupils make progress. Experts are brought in to work with pupils. Teachers track pupils' progress and leaders monitor and evaluate the impact that interventions have had, reporting on this to the trust board. For instance, because of support, the proportions of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieving a pass in the Year 1 phonics check were above national averages in 2017.

Governance of the school

- Trustees have a real passion to make this school successful, backed by professional expertise. They have a clear understanding of their roles. They have taken positive steps to ensure that the trust boards have the necessary expertise across the range of areas needed. They have worked with leaders to identify improvement priorities and ensure that rapid change has occurred.
- The trustees challenge the principal and other leaders effectively, holding them to account. The trust provides a central team to manage matters such as funding bids. This enables school staff to focus on their core purpose, which is improving teaching and learning to raise achievement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and trustees are stringent in their approach to safeguarding. Careful checks are made on staff, volunteers and trustees.
- Systems are in place to ensure that staff are trained appropriately, and receive regular updates.
- Policy and practice are securely implemented. Safeguarding underpins all elements of the school. Concerns over pupils' welfare are dealt with rapidly and thoroughly documented.
- There is good partnership working with parents and other agencies. Any concerns are reported to the appropriate body and followed up to ensure that pupils have the support they need.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Most pupils make good and sometimes better progress across the range of subjects. Pupils are excited by their learning. This, in turn, contributes to their well-being and leads to good behaviour for learning.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and are passionate about their teaching. They provide well-planned, engaging lessons that challenge and excite pupils, enabling them to make connections between different aspects of the curriculum. This was seen with a Year 3 class, who were designing and building model bridges, using mathematics, science, technology and art skills.
- Questioning is used to skilfully check pupils' understanding, to make them think and develop their reasoning and to make them justify the answers they give.
- Teachers regularly check on the progress being made by their pupils. Leaders cross-check that standards are accurate.
- Expectations are clear. There is purpose in learning. For instance, in mathematics, a girl who needed a number square was reminded that she needed to 'look at her times-tables to make sure of them'. The onus is put on the pupils to solve the problem.
- Teachers monitor pupils' progress effectively and quickly intervene if there is a need to

deal with gaps in learning, as was seen in a mathematics lesson where the teacher was making sure the pupils were using place value correctly in their calculations.

- Misconceptions are dealt with promptly. Teachers use many different strategies to help individuals and groups understand their learning.
- Pupils are encouraged to talk about their thinking before beginning to write, rehearsing and clarifying their responses, building upon prior learning.
- Homework is set regularly. This is supplemented by a suite of online resources which can be accessed through the school's website.
- Pupils generally use time in lessons well. They are focused on their learning and make rapid progress. For instance, a Year 4 class worked with intense concentration while learning new skills when creating coil pots in clay as part of a cross-curricular project on ancient Greece.
- Occasionally, teachers miss opportunities to move learning on, for instance when the task is not well matched to pupil ability and too much time is spent on one activity. This was seen when all pupils in a class were working on the same handwriting exercise.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are very articulate, polite and display confidence. They value their education and understand how it can help them be successful in life, showing considerable stamina as learners. They have excellent attitudes to learning and are extremely proud of their school and all it that it offers. Classroom discussion is a strength. Pupils discuss topics in a respectful manner.
- Pupils are keen to discuss how to keep themselves healthy, how they get involved in sport and how they love the active play equipment. They learn about a healthy diet and make healthy choices themselves with school lunches, saying that they like the meals and 'the food is very nice'.
- The personal, social and health education curriculum deals with healthy relationships and staying safe from abuse and exploitation. Safeguarding is a thread that runs throughout the school.
- Pupils feel safe. They understand how to keep themselves safe. They know that staff are alert and will look after them.
- Pupils say that there is little bullying. If it does happen, pupils know whom to go to immediately and are confident that it will be sorted out. Peer mediation is in place. Pupils feel empowered by this. Staff and pupils work together to sort out any issues.
- Pupils understand about e-safety and are happy that their parents are also supported to know about e-safety. Pupils were particularly keen to share how the school provides interpreters at meetings, to make sure that parents understand what is being said to them.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- High expectations for behaviour are set by staff. Pupils are very familiar with 'the golden rules', which are used consistently, with clear rewards and sanctions. Robust systems are in place to monitor behaviour. Any incidents are logged, actions decided on and impact recorded. Leaders analyse patterns and trends of behaviour. Regular reports are made to the trustees which comment on standards of behaviour. There are no exclusions.
- The impact of these consistent strategies to promote high standards of behaviour can be seen through the focus of pupils in classrooms, their happy collaboration in the playground and their sociable behaviour in the lunch hall. Pupils move around the school with no fuss. Occasional minor low-level disruption is very rare and is handled effectively and in a low-key manner.
- Systems are in place to follow up on absence. A home-school liaison officer has been deployed. The school nurse is involved, for instance offering flu immunisations. Where necessary, a local authority attendance officer makes home visits. There is regular monitoring of the impact of these strategies, which remain flexible according to needs.
- Attendance figures have improved since the school became an academy. The number of pupils who are regularly absent has fallen because of hard work done by the attendance team who liaise with families.
- The trustees have worked with a parent forum to develop the school's holiday pattern to minimise the impact of religious observance on attendance.
- There are still a small number of pupils whose families take extended holidays in term-time. This interrupts pupils' learning. The school is working with families to reduce the impact of these holidays further.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils make outstanding progress in almost all years at the school. Most children enter the school with little or no English. A high proportion of children enter the school part-way through their education, many with no English and no prior schooling. The school systematically builds pupils' language and learning until they leave at the end of key stage 2 with outstanding outcomes.
- The school's tracking of progress shows that pupils who have been at the school from the beginning of Reception achieve higher outcomes than those who join the school part-way through their schooling and demonstrate outstanding progress.
- The attainment of almost all pupils is improving rapidly from their starting points. All pupils are challenged, no matter what their ability level, to make the best progress possible. A combination of high expectations, high-quality and effective teaching, interventions where appropriate, and hard work from the pupils culminate in exceptional outcomes. In 2017, key stage 2 provisional outcomes were in the top 10% nationally for reading, writing and mathematics.
- School information shows that throughout each year group and across the core

subjects of English, mathematics, science and computing, as well as the eight subjects of the wider curriculum, pupils are making substantial and sustained progress from their starting points. Many pupils enter the school well below age-related expectations, but soon all are developing excellent knowledge, understanding and skills.

- When they first come to the school, many pupils are in the early stages of English language acquisition. The focus on speaking and listening skills equips them with the necessary skills they need to develop their potential at key stage 2. Comparative information collected by the school shows that even better progress was made by groups in 2017 than in 2016.
- This internal information is collected from assessments which are moderated within the school, across the trust and with other local schools, and correlated by school leaders' learning walks and book scrutiny.
- Outcomes in phonics in Year 1 at the expected standard were higher than national averages in both 2015 and 2016 and have remained broadly in line with the average since then, despite new arrivals to the group who had not attended school before. Almost all pupils who had been in the school from the beginning of Reception achieved the expected standard. As only 59% of these pupils achieved the expected good level of development at the end of Reception, this shows rapid progress for these pupils.
- The school's own tracking information shows that the most able pupils make more than expected progress in most year groups.
- School information shows that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making accelerated progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school's own information shows that most disadvantaged pupils make rapid progress with their learning.
- The proportions of disadvantaged pupils and of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check are above national averages for the past three years.
- Key stage 1 provisional outcomes in 2017 were below national average standards, but from their starting points, pupils made accelerated progress in reading, writing and mathematics, to standards that were broadly in line with national averages. A quarter of the group taking key stage 1 assessments in 2017 joined the school during Years 1 and 2, and some arrived during the term before the tests. A number of these pupils were international new arrivals with no previous experience of school and no English.
- Key stage 2 outcomes in 2016 were very good. Writing, mathematics, science and English grammar, punctuation and spelling were above national averages. Disadvantaged pupils did better than other pupils nationally.
- Pupils know the importance of reading and love to read. They take their books home to read regularly. The library is at the heart of the school. There are lots of books and other reading resources throughout the school. All pupils are given a book each year from the trustees as part of the high-profile 'Read Achieve Succeed' programme, which has a big emphasis on reading for pleasure. Classroom talk is a focus of the school. Pupils are happy to discuss their learning.

Early years provision

Good

- The new early years leader has not yet had time to make an impact on early years provision. The senior leadership team are providing support while she settles in and assesses the changes which need to be made to the provision.
- The early years provision is in two separate units. The Nursery is housed in a building across the road. Staff in the Nursery building are in telephone contact with the main school building. The Reception class is in the main school building. Children attend Nursery during mornings only.
- The early years provision reflects the same high standards of safety and welfare as the rest of the school. There are currently no children in nappies, but there are appropriate changing facilities for when they are needed. First aid is provided.
- Safeguarding in the early years is vigilant. All statutory requirements are met. Staff receive regular training and briefings to enable them to keep children safe.
- In both settings, the personal development, behaviour and welfare of children are good. Children have good attitudes to learning, behave well and have strong relationships with adults and peers. Children play collaboratively, share the resources and learn to take turns. The Nursery environment is welcoming and attractively set out, with many displays about phonics and numbers. It is a language-rich environment. The development of the Reception learning environment is an ongoing development.
- Curriculum regulations are met. Teaching and the deployment of teaching assistants are strong. Children settle well, feel safe and take part in the exciting activities which have an emphasis on developing skills, number and language. Children concentrate and are motivated to try hard. There are lots of examples of assessments on walls, and a learning tree with notes about children's successes for parents to see.
- There is a good emphasis on developing children's language and physical skills across early years. Staff use high-quality resources to provide experiences for children that are varied and stimulating. Staff use good questioning skills in order to prompt children to think and to practise their own language skills.
- Assessment is a strength. Very few children start in the school having been screened for special educational needs and/or disabilities. The baseline assessments in Nursery identify a range of needs. A high proportion of children have been identified as having speech and language needs, so additional funding is made available to bring in support from the speech and language service. Early identification of their needs means that these pupils make strong progress from their starting points. For example, children who could say very little when they entered the Nursery rapidly develop their vocabulary and fluency.
- There are a range of interventions for disadvantaged pupils in Nursery and Reception. For instance, the pupil premium grant funds weekly 'hands and voices' sessions to help develop new vocabulary. There are workshops for parents, particularly to improve their English skills so that they can support their children with home learning. Trips are subsidised so that children have opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world.
- At the time of the inspection, the Nursery outdoor area was out of use due to

vandalism of a fence. Much of the equipment had been moved to space indoors so activities could continue. A contract was in place for the fence to be replaced soon.

- The records of children's progress learning journeys are well presented and useful. Teachers use records frequently to talk with parents about children's interests and progress. Parents contribute to both initial and ongoing assessment. Homework is set to help parents to understand what children have done in school and contribute to their children's learning
- Many pupils enter Reception with skills which are below those typical for their age. They make good progress from their starting points during their time in early years. At the end of Reception, assessments suggest that many of the children have not yet reached expectations for their age. However, when only the pupils who have been in the school through Nursery and Reception are considered, their outcomes are positive. These children have made rapid progress because their starting points were below those typical for their age.

School details

Unique reference number	141401
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10036588

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Paul Makin
Principal	Jonathan Bell
Telephone number	0161 627 4257
Website	www.westwood.theharmonytrust.org
Email address	jbell01@westwood.theharmonytrust.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school converted to academy status on 1 November 2014. It is a member of the Harmony Trust, a multi-academy organisation based in Oldham.
- Westwood Academy is an average-sized primary school. Children attend the Nursery on a part-time basis.
- The proportion of girls is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above the national average.

Most pupils are from Asian backgrounds.

- The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is above the national average. Languages spoken include Urdu, Swahili, Romanian, Italian, Spanish, Kurdish and Polish.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is similar to the national average.
- A high proportion of pupils are international new arrivals and fair access pupils. The purpose of fair access is to ensure that children who do not have a school place are offered one as quickly as possible.
- The school met the current government floor standards in 2016.

Information about this inspection

- An inspector spoke with parents as they brought their children to school. Inspectors reviewed the comments of parents, pupils and staff made through the Ofsted online questionnaires and the school's own questionnaires.
- Inspectors observed teaching and carried out learning walks in classes, the school hall and outdoors. Some of the observations were made jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors observed pupils during break and lunchtimes. An inspector attended an assembly.
- Inspectors met regularly with senior leaders, teachers who hold posts of responsibility and a range of other staff throughout the inspection.
- An inspector heard some children read. Inspectors looked at a range of pupils' work, some in classrooms and some during a formal work scrutiny.
- The inspectors spoke with a wide range of pupils from all age groups in classrooms, during formal meetings and informally around the school site.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the trust board.
- Inspectors considered a range of information about the school, including the school's website, reports about how well the school is doing, school improvement plans and self-evaluation documents. In addition, inspectors scrutinised school policies and records about the care and progress of pupils. Inspectors reviewed documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils.

Inspection team

Linda Griffiths, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Doreen Davenport	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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