

West Park School

West Rd, Spondon, Derby DE21 7BT

Inspection dates 26–27 April 2016

Overall effectiveness **Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- A culture of high expectations, and an uncompromising commitment to high standards, has ensured that pupils behave well and make good and often outstanding progress.
- Across a range of subjects, pupils attain well. The proportion of pupils who gain five or more A* to C GCSE grades, including English and mathematics, is significantly and consistently above average.
- The most-able pupils excel at the school, making strong progress to attain the highest grades across a range of subjects.
- Leaders support teachers effectively to develop their practice. A culture of sharing good ideas and learning from each other leads to consistently confident teaching.
- The headteacher has ensured that a clear set of values underpins the school's work. A committed and inspiring leader, he is well respected by pupils, staff and parents.
- Leaders provide effective support to local schools. This has been instrumental in raising standards elsewhere.
- The school instils in pupils a keen sense of right and wrong, the importance of good character and of taking responsibility for one's actions. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the challenges of life in modern Britain.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Leaders have not ensured that additional funding has led to sustained improvements in the attendance and outcomes of disadvantaged pupils.
- The least-able pupils, and those with special educational needs or disability, do not always get the support they need to do well.
- Not all subject leaders have ensured that teachers provide feedback in line with their policies.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the use of pupil premium funding is consistently effective in improving the attendance and outcomes of eligible pupils
 - subject leaders make certain that teachers provide feedback to pupils in line with their departmental policies.

- Improve teaching by ensuring that the least-able pupils, and those with special educational needs or disability, consistently receive the support they need to do well.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher has led the school with unfailing dedication. He is a figurehead of the local community, well respected by pupils, staff, parents and other educational leaders.
- The headteacher's steadfast insistence on high standards is the hallmark of the school. Its distinctive ethos of 'achievement, confidence, responsibility' sets a high bar for what is expected of staff and pupils alike, and has led to sustained high outcomes for pupils over a number of years.
- An ambitious vision and clear set of values underpin the school's work. Leaders, governors and staff and pupils are united in their purpose to provide a culture in which pupils can learn effectively and be successful.
- Staff enjoy working at West Park because of the positive and supportive relationships they enjoy with leaders. One described the school as 'a wonderful school which makes a massive difference to the local community and ensures pupils are supported and encouraged to reach their potential'.
- Leaders provide effective support to other local schools. One headteacher described how this support had been 'vital in shaping and shifting our progress as a school. The impact is seen in our improved results.'
- Teachers make good use of the training they receive to develop their skills further. Regular lesson observations inform leaders of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching, and they use this information to provide additional support as appropriate. As a result, the quality of teaching is consistently good. The targets set for some teachers in their performance management are not always closely linked to whole-school priorities and are not always focused on improving outcomes for groups of pupils.
- Leaders recognise that they have tried to maintain a 'hands-on' approach to running the school while supporting other schools in their improvement. Inevitably, this has led to some areas of their work being less effective. They recognise that they now need to empower middle leaders to take increasing responsibility for school improvement.
- Subject leaders provide effective support for teachers but do not always ensure that whole-school priorities inform their work. Not all subject leaders have successfully implemented the school's new assessment policy, for example, or ensure that teachers provide effective feedback to pupils. As a result, pupils are sometimes unclear about how well they are doing.
- Leaders have not ensured that pupil premium funding is used effectively to improve the attendance and outcomes of eligible pupils. As a result, these pupils have not consistently made the same good progress as others. Leaders did not have a clear view of the impact of the spending. This was an area for improvement from the previous inspection.
- An emphasis on academic subjects ensures that pupils are well prepared for their next steps and leave West Park with the skills and qualifications they need to be successful in their next steps. Academic learning is well balanced by a rich range of extra-curricular options. Pupils are encouraged to discover and develop their talents outside the classroom and to play a full part in the wider life of the school. The Duke of Edinburgh scheme and the school's sporting teams are particularly successful.
- The school instils in pupils a keen sense of responsibility, self-discipline and respect. They leave the school well prepared to make a purposeful contribution to society, and for the challenges of life in a multicultural society. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning is effective because it links clearly to the school's values of making the right choices, building good relationships with others and getting involved in all that West Park has to offer.
- The school encourages pupils to 'be themselves'. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors bring a wide range of skills and expertise to strengthen the leadership of the school. They work closely with leaders to set the strategic direction for the school and are united around a common vision to ensure an outstanding education for pupils.
 - Through the headteacher's report they ensure they are well informed about the school's work, and hold leaders to account for its effectiveness. Through the committee structure they keep a close eye on the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures and behaviour trends as well as performance information.
 - They have ensured that leaders take seriously and act on any concerns raised by parents. For example, they made helpful suggestions to work with a partner school to improve the provision for pupils with special educational needs and disability.

- Governors have not held leaders sufficiently to account for the impact of additional funding on the progress of those eligible for the pupil premium.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The designated safeguarding lead has ensured that staff fully understand their responsibilities in relation to child protection and are well briefed in school procedures. Through her attendance at a local safeguarding network she ensures she is well informed about local risks and well supported in her role. She has recently undergone training to become a local champion for child sexual exploitation. Checks on staff meet the necessary requirements. Governors monitor this aspect of the school's work through the reports on safeguarding presented to the curriculum, standards and pupil care committee.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching is effective because well-established routines enable pupils to learn effectively. Teachers place high expectations on how pupils should behave and what they can achieve. Pupils respond well, showing attention, focus and pride in their work.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to ensure that pupils know how to do well and be successful in examinations. The vast majority of teaching is pitched at the right level, enabling pupils to make at least good progress across a range of subjects.
- Teachers use questioning effectively to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding and adapt the learning accordingly. Where this is most effective, teachers consistently challenge pupils to explain and evaluate their answers. For example, in a Year 7 history lesson, the teacher successfully led a questioning session that enabled pupils to make thoughtful and insightful comparisons between medieval England and the Arab Empire.
- A culture of sharing good practice enables teachers to learn from each other and develop their skills. As a result, teachers are confident, effective practitioners.
- Teachers make the most of opportunities to boost pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy. Pupils become increasingly familiar with the key words and terms for different topics and, as a result, are increasingly confident in their spelling and use of correct terminology. Reading skills are well developed through opportunities to read in class and use skills of inference to justify their responses.
- Teaching makes clear and explicit links to the wider aspects of pupils' learning, such as their social, moral and cultural development. For example, in geography, pupils developed thoughtful responses to the question of providing aid to third world countries.
- Not all teaching enables the least-able pupils, and those with special educational needs or disability, to make good progress. On occasion, these pupils do not receive the support they need to do well and are not confident to ask for help. A few who spoke with inspectors stated that not all teachers are sufficiently sensitive to their needs. Although the school provides an effective programme of catch up and support, this limits the progress they are able to make in class.
- Not all teachers provide feedback in line with their departmental policies. As a result, some pupils are not clear about how well they are doing. While pupils know their long-term targets, not all fully understand the new assessment policy, or what it means in terms of the progress they are making.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school's programme of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) is effective, particularly at key stage 3, in ensuring that pupils develop the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to keep themselves safe. In a Year 7 session for example, pupils presented thoughtful dramas on the dangers of going to parties. Pupils told the inspector how much they enjoyed learning about real-life issues in this practical way.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms that bullying can take. They state that bullying is rare in their school, and are unequivocal that teachers and leaders would take immediate and effective action should it occur.
- The school's programme of careers education is effective in enabling pupils to make good choices for their future. The proportion who go on to higher education, employment and training is consistently

above the national average. This includes those pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium.

- The headteacher in particular is a visible presence around the school and pupils appreciate the efforts he and the associate headteacher make to know them individually. They ensure, for example, that the after-school detention sessions they run are effective in re-focusing pupils and coaching them to adopt more positive attitudes. Many spoke movingly of the support these leaders had given them. One said, 'They have helped me and my mum so much. I would trust them with anything.'
- Through effective teaching, the vast majority of pupils develop the self-confidence and self-awareness they need to be successful in learning and in life. Some of the school's least-able and more vulnerable pupils are not helped to develop the resilience they need to do well and persevere with difficult tasks.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In lessons and around the school, pupils conduct themselves with self-discipline and good manners. They need no prompting to get to class on time, and arrive well equipped to learn. They are polite, friendly and welcoming to visitors.
- The school site is clean, tidy and free from litter and graffiti. Corridors and dining areas at times become congested, but pupils generally manage this well and behave with due regard to their own and others' safety.
- The school applies a clear and consistent set of rules to manage pupils' behaviour, with a strong emphasis on developing responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society. No one is in any doubt of the high standards expected of a West Park pupil. Older pupils in particular told inspectors how they thought that the school was successful in helping pupils to improve their behaviour. While levels of fixed-term exclusions are below average, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are excluded from the school is well above that of others.
- Pupils' overall attendance is above average and improving. However, some groups of pupils do not attend as well as others. This is particularly true of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability. Pupil premium funding has not ensured that eligible pupils are helped to improve their attendance. The proportion of these pupils who are frequently absent from school remains well above average.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- Pupils enter the school with levels of prior attainment that are in line with national averages. They make good and often outstanding progress and leave the school well equipped to go on to further study. The proportion who achieve five A* to C grades including English and mathematics is consistently above the national average. Across a range of subjects, pupils achieve consistently well.
- The proportions making the progress expected in English and mathematics are consistently high compared to national averages.
- The most-able pupils excel at the school, consistently achieving well above the national averages for this group. In English and mathematics, the proportions who exceed their expected targets are well above average. In a range of subjects, the proportions achieving the highest grades are consistently high.
- The progress made by the least-able pupils is not as strong as that made by pupils of middle and higher ability. This was evident in inspectors' observations of teaching, where less than effective support from the class teacher sometimes hindered the progress that the least able were able to make.
- Outcomes for pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding fell in 2015 for the second year. Gaps in the attainment and progress made by these pupils compared to others grew. The proportion who achieved five A* to C grades including English and mathematics was, for the second year, well below that of others. These pupils were, in 2015, two grades behind others in school in mathematics, and over one grade behind in English. The proportion of these pupils who made the progress expected was well below others in school and nationally.
- Information provided by the school shows that these pupils are now back on track, and leaders predict that in 2016 they will achieve in line with their peers in English, and closer to their peers in mathematics. Local authority officers confirm the accuracy of the school's predictions. Across the school, they do not always keep pace with their peers. Leaders do not ensure that funding is used to accelerate the progress they make, so that they leave the school with the same good qualifications as their peers.
- In observations by inspectors in some classes, these disadvantaged pupils continue to be affected by poorer attendance and their progress is not as strong as others. At key stage 3 for example, gaps in their attainment and progress remain constant. While leaders are confident that these gaps are eradicated as

they move through the school, not enough is done to ensure that they are given the help and support they need on joining the school to improve their lower levels of literacy and numeracy.

- Pupils with special educational needs and disability make slower progress than others in key stage 3. These pupils are rightly set the same aspirational targets as other pupils. However, while an effective programme of intervention helps them to catch up, they do not always get the support they need in class to do well.
- The school makes very little use of alternative provision. Currently, just one pupil is educated off-site. The school maintains good contact with providers to ensure pupils attend well and make good progress.

School details

Unique reference number	136634
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	10017694

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,248
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Neville Taylor
Headteacher	Brian Walker
Telephone number	01332 662 337
Website	www.westpark.derby.sch.uk
Email address	info@westpark.derby.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–26 September 2013

Information about this school

- West Park School is larger than the average-sized secondary school. It converted to become an academy in April 2011. At its previous inspection, the school was judged to be outstanding.
- The large majority of pupils are White British, with a lower than average proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds. Few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils in local authority care, and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is above average.
- The school meets the government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- Currently one pupil attends off-site alternative provision at the Kingsmead Centre.
- The headteacher is a national leader of education. He and other leaders provide support to other schools locally.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 53 part lessons. They visited assemblies, tutor sessions and the school's inclusion unit.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and governors. The lead inspector met with three members of the governing body, including the chair, and with the school's improvement officer from the local authority. Inspectors met with five groups of pupils and spoke informally with other pupils at break and lunchtimes. A telephone call was made to the pupil referral unit used by the school.
- A range of documents was considered, including: the school's own evaluation of its work, the school improvement plan, information about the progress and attainment of groups of pupils, and attendance and behaviour records. Inspectors also looked at policies and practices related to safeguarding, and looked at the safety of the school site.
- A range of pupils' work was scrutinised by inspectors.
- Inspectors took into account 53 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and 69 responses to the staff questionnaire. Emails submitted by parents were also looked at, as were letters from leaders of other schools who have received support from the school.
- The inspection was carried out in response to a qualifying complaint being made to Ofsted. Inspectors sought to establish the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding procedures.

Inspection team

Deirdre Duignan, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
William Morris	Ofsted Inspector
Russell Barr	Ofsted Inspector
Christopher Davies	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew Sammy	Ofsted Inspector
Bernadette Green	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Vasey	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2016

