

Inspection of Westbourne School

Huthwaite Road, Sutton-In-Ashfield NG17 2EL

Inspection dates: 8 to 10 June 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Not previously inspected

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and pupils increasingly enjoy coming to school. Staff are enthusiastic. They care about the pupils and know them well. They listen to the pupils and encourage them to try to achieve their best. Staff try to make sure the school is a calm place to work and learn. They support pupils to engage in their learning.

Staff regularly check pupils' learning and identify what is most important for pupils to learn. They use teaching approaches that suit each pupil's needs. They help pupils to be fluent readers and enjoy reading. They teach pupils to have high aspirations. Over time, pupils become more independent and resilient. Most gain experience and qualifications that will help them when they leave school.

Pupils usually behave well. Some find it difficult to manage their emotions. Staff help pupils to learn to understand themselves and to respect others. Pupils say, 'If we have arguments, we talk about it and figure it out.'

Bullying is rare and pupils say they feel safe. Pupils know there are members of staff they can speak with if they are worried about something. Staff do their best to resolve any problems should they arise.

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

Leaders and staff are ambitious in their vision to provide all pupils with the foundations for future success. The school has a 'nurture-based' approach running through all its work. The focus of this approach is to enable all pupils to catch up on lost learning and achieve well. Leaders say that 'we start with the child'.

Leaders know what the school does well and what needs to improve. They have rapidly brought about improvements in the planning of the curriculum. Leaders ensure that staff adapt the curriculums for the different subjects well to meet the needs of the individual pupils.

Leaders and staff have made it a priority that all pupils can read fluently. Staff are good at encouraging reluctant readers and identifying exactly what pupils need to help them read well. They teach pupils to discuss and think about the books they read. This helps pupils understand relationships, explore new vocabulary and think about their learning in other subjects.

Teachers have secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. Staff are often skilled in using questioning and encouragement to motivate and help pupils learn. Staff help pupils link new learning to their previous learning. Pupils achieve well and often produce work of good quality in different subjects. Some pupils who have previously struggled with writing, for example, can now write at length in different styles and

use adventurous vocabulary. In some subjects, staff are occasionally not as effective as they could be in helping pupils remember and show what they have learned.

Regular outdoor education opportunities enrich the curriculum. These include cycling and archery and the opportunity to complete projects that lead to nationally recognised awards. Such activities help to motivate pupils to learn and develop valuable social skills. Staff help pupils to gain experience and qualifications to prepare them for further study or work. In a life-skills lesson, for example, pupils learned about and discussed the importance of budgeting and how to choose a bank account. Older pupils can gain experience of catering, floristry, construction and hairdressing. Staff provide effective careers advice and support. The school often keeps in contact with pupils when they have left the school to check how they are getting on.

Leaders have improved pupils' behaviour. Staff use a consistent approach that is based on building positive relationships with and between the pupils. Staff know the things that might upset pupils. If there is a problem, they respond calmly and talk with pupils to help them understand their emotions and reactions. Pupils say that boys and girls in the school respect each other. Staff have taught pupils about not using inappropriate language. This has helped to improve pupils' use of language. However, staff sometimes do not consider carefully enough how they can better help pupils to treat or speak with others respectfully.

Staff see pupils' personal development as central to their work, preparing them to be effective citizens. They consider the negative experiences many pupils have had when teaching about such things as social media, cyber-bullying, families and different types of relationships. Staff teach pupils how to keep safe, including online. Pupils learn to think about different points of view and to understand why it is important to respect people who may be different to them. When talking about voting, pupils say, 'It is good that people have a choice. Not everyone does.'

The proprietor and governing body know the school well. Members of the governing body visit the school regularly and check the school meets its statutory responsibilities. The vast majority of staff say senior leaders are mindful about their workload. Staff are proud to work with the pupils and morale is positive. The proprietor and senior leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards are met. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and has its safeguarding policy available on the school's website.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders provide regular training so that staff have a secure knowledge of safeguarding. Staff know that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. They are vigilant and know what to do if they have a concern about a pupils' welfare.

Leaders check pupils' well-being and safety, including of pupils who learn off site or attend alternative provision. They act appropriately and promptly to follow up concerns about pupils' welfare. They record the actions they take. Leaders work closely with parents and carers and external agencies when this is needed. Leaders check carefully that new staff are suitable to work with pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- In a few subjects, the implementation of the curriculum is not fully embedded. Where this is the case, teachers are less effective in adapting the curriculum so that pupils can show what they have learned. Leaders must make sure that teaching in all subjects helps pupils to remember what they have learned over time.
- Pupils understand that they need to improve their behaviour and show respect to others. However, there are occasions when some pupils do not behave appropriately towards other people, including through their use of language. While leaders act quickly when incidents occur, they should refine further their procedures to identify and support pupils to manage their behaviour.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	146288
DfE registration number	891/6041
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10194785
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	26
Number of part-time pupils	3
Proprietor	Acorn Care and Education Limited
Chair	David Leatherbarrow
Headteacher	Ollie Sharp
Annual fees (day pupils)	£55,000–£70,000
Telephone number	01623 392430
Website	https://www.westbourneschool.org/
Email address	info@westbourneschool.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Westbourne School is an independent special school. The proprietor of the school is Acorn Care and Education Limited.
- The school caters for pupils who have autism spectrum disorder and social, emotional and mental health difficulties. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school is registered to admit up to 49 full-time boys and girls in the age range 11 to 18 years.
- The executive headteacher was appointed in January 2021. The assistant headteacher was appointed in July 2020. The head of education for the school was appointed in September 2020. The school is increasing the number of pupils on its roll. Other members of teaching and support staff are also new to the school.
- A new headteacher has been appointed from June 2021.
- Four pupils who are above the compulsory school age receive their education in the main school. They pursue a curriculum that is appropriate to their stage of education, including preparing them for adulthood.
- The school makes use of two alternative providers: West Nottinghamshire College in Mansfield, which is a registered provider, and Blend Youth Project in Alferton, which is an unregistered provider.
- This is the school's first standard inspection since the school opened on 23 April 2019.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- We met with the executive headteacher, assistant headteacher, head of education, special educational needs coordinator, middle leaders, teachers and other staff. We met with the chair of the governing body who is also a regional director of education on behalf of Acorn Care and Education Ltd and spoke with a representative of the proprietor.
- We looked closely at English, mathematics, science and personal, social and health education, as well as pupils' work in geography and history, to evaluate the quality of education. In looking at English, we focused on reading. As far as

possible, we met with lead members of staff for each subject, visited lessons, looked at pupils' workbooks and met with staff and some pupils who were involved in the lessons we visited.

- We met with other staff and pupils, both formally and informally. On some occasions, an adult was present when we spoke with pupils to reduce any possible anxieties pupils may have felt.
- Throughout the inspection, we met with the safeguarding leaders and other staff to discuss safeguarding. Safeguarding records and processes were evaluated, including those relating to exclusions and behaviour. We also considered documentation relating to the checks made on new staff.
- We toured the school buildings and site to check the school's compliance with Part 5 of the independent school standards.
- We took account of four responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and three free-text responses. We also took account of 29 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the pupils' questionnaire.

Inspection team

John Lawson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Janis Warren

Ofsted Inspector

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