

# Inspection of Westbourne School

Huthwaite School, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire NG17 2EL

---

Inspection dates: 23 to 25 April 2024

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

---

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

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

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils say that they feel safe. Staff are very caring and supportive. Most pupils appreciate the help staff give them. Staff understand pupils' individual needs well. They are very aware of the difficulties pupils experience. They offer a nurturing approach to help pupils understand themselves. There are lots of adults available to support pupils at all times. Pupils know staff will look after them and encourage them to try to achieve their best. Most pupils say that staff are helping them to manage their emotions. Pupils are engaging more now with their education than they have previously, before joining the school.

Staff offer safe spaces and time for pupils to regulate their behaviour. For most pupils, this results in improvements in their behaviour and attendance. Most pupils say that if bullying happens, staff will deal with it quickly and effectively.

There is an ambitious curriculum in place that supports pupils at their particular stage of learning. The school ensures that the curriculum begins to fill any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Staff are committed to ensuring that all pupils are able to read and that they develop a love for reading. As a result, most older pupils achieve success in recognised qualifications.

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

The school has an ambitious vision to ensure that all pupils become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens by developing their self-belief and pride. They achieve this through a 'pathways' structure and 'nurture-based' approach. The focus of this approach is to enable all pupils to catch up on lost learning and achieve well.

Teachers use their good subject knowledge to present information clearly and engage pupils in interesting learning activities. They are skilled in using questioning and encouragement to motivate and help pupils to learn. They provide work for pupils that builds on their previous learning. This allows pupils to deepen their knowledge of the topics they are studying. In subjects such as art, pupils excel and demonstrate a complex range of deep knowledge and skill. Older pupils benefit from vocational experiences and courses in engineering, catering and hair and beauty. Life-skills lessons help some pupils develop independent living skills that prepare them well for adulthood.

Staff adapt the curriculums for the different subjects to meet the needs of the individual pupils. In some subjects, these adaptations do not always make clear what the important knowledge is that pupils need to focus on. The work pupils are given does not always match the ambitious aims of the curriculum. In these subjects, pupils do not always have the best opportunities to develop and demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

Staff receive information about pupils' needs through 'pupil passports'. These do not

always contain the precise information and targets staff need to know. As a result, not all staff understand the best ways to support these pupils in their learning.

Reading has been prioritised for all pupils. There is a systematic phonics programme in place to support the teaching of early reading. Staff are well trained to help pupils become more confident readers. Older pupils who need extra help with reading have access to a range of resources and interventions. This support is helping many to become more accurate and fluent readers.

Staff have been well trained to support pupils with their social, emotional and mental health difficulties. They are experts at providing the pastoral support pupils need to feel safe and ready to learn. Staff know the things that might upset or 'trigger' pupils. Pupils try hard to manage their emotions and regulate their behaviour. However, at times, for some pupils, it is too easy for them to opt out of learning. There is not yet a fully consistent approach taken by all staff when addressing pupils' behaviour.

The school has prioritised pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy the regular outdoor education opportunities that enrich the curriculum. Staff arrange work experience and prepare pupils for further study or work. Older pupils benefit from structured careers lessons. Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education lessons are responsive to current issues and situations that arise in the school. Pupils learn about British values. Staff teach pupils how to identify risks and keep safe, including when online. Pupils learn about how to maintain a healthy mind and body. Pupils learn to think about different points of view. They understand why it is important to respect people who may be different to them. The school council is active in making decisions about the school. The members of this council speak with considered insight about the importance of democracy and the right to vote.

The proprietor and senior leaders have strategically focused on the areas of development that will have the most impact, such as the rapid improvements made to the teaching of mathematics. Those with responsibility for the school know it well. They understand their statutory duties and have a good understanding of the independent school standards (the standards). The premises are well maintained. Regular and thorough checks are made to ensure that all the health and safety and fire safety regulations are met. Risk assessments are regularly updated. Policies are up to date and reflect the latest national guidance.

The vast majority of staff say that senior leaders are mindful about their workload and well-being. Staff are proud to work at the school.

The school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The policies for relationships and sex education and safeguarding are available on the school's website.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and proprietor)

- In some subjects, the ambitious intent of the curriculum is not always matched by purposeful learning opportunities that fully develop the intended knowledge and skills the school has identified. As a result, opportunities are missed for pupils to develop and demonstrate their knowledge and skills as well as they could in these areas. This also makes it harder for staff to check if pupils know and remember the main thing that they should have learned. The school needs to ensure that in all subjects, pupils develop the precisely identified knowledge and skills they need to build their learning over time.
- Pupils' passports do not precisely identify the support staff need to provide and what success for pupils looks like. This limits staff's ability to know how best to support pupils and check that they are making as much progress as they should, including when taking into account the longer-term outcomes as stated in their education, health and care plans (EHC plan). Furthermore, pupils are not always clear as to how best they can fulfil their targets. This, in turn, can limit how well these pupils achieve. The school should ensure that all pupils' targets have the necessary precision and focus to enable staff to support pupils to achieve as well as they can.
- Not all staff take a consistent approach based on the school's three rules when addressing pupils' behaviour. For example, there does not appear to be an agreed approach towards addressing pupils' inappropriate use of poor language. At times, for some pupils, it is too easy for them to opt out of learning. The school needs to ensure consistency across all staff in the application of its behaviour policy.

## 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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	146288
<b>DfE registration number</b>	891/6041
<b>Local authority</b>	Nottinghamshire County Council
<b>Inspection number</b>	10322509
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent special school
<b>School category</b>	Independent special school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	8 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	81
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Acorn Care and Education Limited
<b>Chair</b>	Richard Power
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kate Martin
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£59,871 to £86,216
<b>Telephone number</b>	01623 392430
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.westbourneschool.org">www.westbourneschool.org</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:info@westbourneschool.org">info@westbourneschool.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 to 10 June 2021

## Information about this school

- The school provides education for pupils aged eight to 18 who have autism and those with social, emotional and mental health difficulties. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- For pupils above compulsory school age, the school provides a programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs.
- The school operates from two nearby sites. The Gateway, Huthwaite School, Sutton in Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, NG17 2EL and The Bridge, Church Avenue, Lammas Road, Sutton-in-Ashfield, NG17 2EB.
- The school uses one registered and one unregistered alternative provision.
- The number of pupils at the school increased significantly in September 2023.
- There have been several changes in the senior leadership since the last standard inspection, including the appointment of a new headteacher in February 2023.
- Since the last standard inspection, the school received an emergency inspection on 14 September 2022, where it met all the standards that were checked.

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors 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.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

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

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team. The lead inspector met with members of the proprietor body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, reading, mathematics and art. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning, and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also considered curriculum plans for, and pupils' work in, PSHE.
- Inspectors considered a wide variety of school documents, including the school development plan.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors 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.

- Inspectors took note of parents' responses on Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's survey of school staff. Inspectors met with pupils to discuss different aspects of the school's provision.
- Inspectors toured the premises and reviewed the school's facilities.

### **Inspection team**

Dave Gilkerson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Caroline Poole

His Majesty's Inspector

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 children looked after, 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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2024