

Westfield House School

Westfield House, 191 Sutton Road, Terrington St Clement, Norfolk PE34 4EX

Inspection dates

24–26 April 2018

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
Sixth form provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders, staff and governors have made sure that all of the independent standards are met.
- The headteacher is uncompromising in her drive to provide the very best for her pupils.
- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher and senior leadership team have driven substantial improvement across the school.
- The highly effective leadership of the headteacher and senior leaders ensures that pupils receive good teaching and a curriculum matched well to their learning needs and interests. This has a good impact **on pupils' outcomes**.
- The quality of teaching, learning and **assessment is good and pupils' outcomes are good**. Leaders, staff and governors share a determination to continue the improvement in standards. They are highly skilled in their work.
- From their low starting points, most pupils make good progress. Outcomes in English and mathematics are good.
- The 16 to 19 study programmes are well led. Teaching, learning and achievement are good.
- Systems to ensure that pupils are protected from risk and stay safe are strong.
- Behaviour is good. Teachers and support staff work effectively together and manage **pupils' behaviour well**. Pupils build high levels of trust with adults in a nurturing environment.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the **school's work**. They appreciate the quality of education and care that the school provides for their children.
- Although attendance is improving for individual pupils, the overall attendance of pupils at the school is not yet at the national average.
- The new information management system for monitoring the progress of pupils is not fully embedded.
- The new qualifications available to pupils are at an early stage of implementation.
- Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. However, they do not hold leaders to account strongly enough for the quality of education provided to pupils.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:
 - they further improve the effectiveness of leadership and management through governors providing greater support and challenge to improve the quality of teaching
 - the new management information system is securely embedded to check that pupils are achieving well across the subjects they are studying
 - they **continue to work with parents to develop strategies to improve pupils' attendance**
 - they continue to embed the new qualifications on offer.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has provided a sharp focus and determination which has led to significant improvements in the school. She has successfully established a culture where everyone is working together to achieve the best outcomes possible for the pupils. Changes in staffing have been exceptionally well managed. The headteacher is resilient, positive, and shows total dedication to the school and a strong desire to help its pupils.
- Central to the success of the school is the way leaders and managers lead a continuous mission to improve teaching. The senior leadership team, driven by the headteacher, has been relentless and effective in its drive to improve the quality of teaching. Inadequate teaching has been eliminated and the amount of good teaching has improved significantly.
- **The school's view of its own effectiveness** is accurate. The senior leadership team works well with the local authority and other schools to check the accuracy of its judgements. Development plans are successful in bringing about sustainable improvement. Changes made to the school since the monitoring inspection in October 2017 ensure that the current overall effectiveness is good. The capacity for further improvement is strong.
- The curriculum is rich and varied. It is tailored to meet the needs of the pupils, most of whom have struggled in their previous schools. Leaders are reflective. They continuously strive to expand the range of qualifications and accreditations pupils can work towards across the school. The new courses available to pupils are at an early stage of implementation.
- The curriculum is not limited to the classroom. A wide range of activities are offered for pupils to participate in. The sensory garden project, the allotment, animal care, rock climbing, trampolining and recycling activities encourage pupils to develop their knowledge and social skills. Pupils gain useful academic qualifications and develop their interpersonal skills. This provides them with a strong foundation to move on to higher levels of study or employment.
- **Leaders monitor pupils' progress carefully** to ensure that appropriate interventions are provided to support swift improvement. **Pupils' outcomes are** carefully reviewed by leaders through regular observations of lessons, learning walks, work scrutinies, the monitoring of plans and the evaluation of progress information.
- **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of the school.** Pupils feel confident, valued and part of the community. They are taught about cultural differences. For example, pupils took part in a world food day, where they experienced traditional dishes from a wide variety of countries. They also learned about different customs, religions, national costumes and traditional dances.
- The evaluation and use of the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used very well. Intensive additional literacy support contributes to these pupils making rapid progress in their reading.
- Parents are almost unanimous in their praise for the school and the way it is helping their children. They highly value the personalised **support. One parent commented, 'The improvements made at the school since the arrival of the new headteacher are**

remarkable. The children now have a positive outlook towards their education and are voicing real aspirations for their future.'

- The school is in the process of adding information to the new school website, which went live on 16 April 2018. Documentation is available to parents and others on request. Information relating to academic achievement or recent examination results is available in school and is presently being added to the new website.
- Staff morale is high. Their responses to the inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about the leadership and management of the school. They are proud to work there. One teacher expressed **the views of many, saying, 'It is amazing working here where the children really do matter.'** Another stated, **'It is truly a great place to work.'**
- The school receives effective support and guidance from the local authority. They offer challenge and provide appropriate advice, which is readily acted upon and valued by the school.
- The school has recently introduced a new management information system for recording **the assessment of pupils' progress**. Senior leaders now evaluate the information gained in greater depth and demonstrate **a consistent understanding of the extent of pupils' progress**. However, the system is at an early stage of development and does not yet fully contribute towards **rigorous evaluation of the school's overall performance**.
- Senior leaders and governors have ensured that of all the independent standards are met, including those not met at the previous standard inspection and the two progress monitoring inspections.

The school's progress towards meeting standards that were not met at the previous inspection.

- **Teachers assess pupils' work efficiently and use this information to set suitably** challenging work to ensure that pupils are stretched. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematical and writing skills in a **range of contexts**. **Pupils' presentation and completion of work improves the longer they are at the school.**
- The school is in the process of adding information to the new school website, which went live on 16 April 2018. Documentation is available to parents and others on request. Information relating to academic achievement or recent examination results is available in school and is presently being added to the new website.
- The previous inspection report and information about the arrangements to safeguard pupils is on the school website.
- **The school's current staffing complement has the capacity to improve the quality of** teaching to meet the needs of the pupils, and to ensure that pupils make good progress, particularly in English and mathematics.
- A copy of the inspection report is maintained on the school website.
- The proprietor demonstrates good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and fulfils their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

Governance

- Governors have an accurate view of the performance of the school. There is regular informal discussion between the headteacher and the governors, especially the chair.
- Governors have a wide range of skills and expertise to support leaders in the school. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- Governors ensure that safer recruitment practices are consistently applied and they give safeguarding a high priority. They closely monitor finances to ensure the financial stability of the school.
- A number of staff have improved their personal qualifications and advanced in their careers through the effective leadership of senior staff and governors.
- Governors acknowledge that they do not routinely check that actions identified in the **school's development plan are making a marked difference to pupils' achievement**. Therefore, while governors carefully monitor the care of pupils, they do not always hold leaders to account for the quality of education that they provide for pupils. Governors are now working with an external consultant to rectify this.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school publishes its safeguarding policy on its website. The policy meets the latest government requirements. Staff receive high-quality training and regular updates on current guidance and legislation on keeping pupils safe. All staff are vigilant in their support for vulnerable pupils.
- Records relating to the checking of the suitability of school personnel and visitors are comprehensive and accurate.
- Staff understand that they all share responsibility for safeguarding. There is a mutual understanding of the need to protect each pupil from all potential risks. Training for staff is up to date and covers all the **school's** statutory duties. All staff are trained on preventing radicalisation, child sexual exploitation and e-safety.
- Leaders and teachers effectively entwine aspects of safeguarding through the curriculum. As a result, pupils are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe, particularly in areas of risk associated with child sexual exploitation and keeping themselves safe online.
- A wide range of detailed risk assessments take good account of the particular needs of pupils and include suitable control measures to minimise risk. Risk assessments are generic as well as personalised to ensure that pupils stay safe.
- The school has very good links with the local authority and other organisations. They are used well to support effective multi-agency work.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is consistently good. Teaching staff have high expectations of pupils. They have good knowledge of the subjects they teach. Teachers **are skilled at meeting pupils' needs**

through careful planning and provide appropriate levels of support. They show resilience in getting the very best out of pupils, resulting in them making strong progress.

- When pupils arrive at the school, they are quickly assessed by teachers to establish what pupils can and cannot do, to plan activities which precisely meet their needs.
- Teachers' strong subject knowledge and enthusiasm lead pupils to quickly engage in their learning.
- Teachers create a positive learning environment where pupils thrive. Pupils are aware of why they are attempting an activity and can clearly explain previous concepts studied. Teachers give freely of their time both in and outside of lessons, **which restores pupils' confidence to explore new challenges and their desire to learn.**
- Teaching assistants work well in partnership with classroom teachers to ensure good progress. They prompt pupils throughout the lesson and focus them on their work. As a result, pupils stay on task throughout the lesson and complete good amounts of work.
- The progress that pupils make accelerates as they become more secure and confident in their learning environment. Pupils learn to engage positively with the relevant and challenging tasks they are set.
- The teaching of disadvantaged pupils is of good quality. Staff guidance and support ensures that pupils make strong progress in their learning across different year groups, in different subject areas.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematical and writing skills in a range of contexts.
- Many pupils demonstrate the ability to work independently and to apply their subject skills. Teachers question pupils effectively to check their understanding. They also question pupils, particularly the most able, well to challenge their thinking. Pupils sustain their concentration and respond **well to teachers' encouragement.**
- **Relationships between staff and pupils is impressive and influential in pupils' development.** The dedicated staff understand the needs of the pupils well. They encourage pupils to communicate their thoughts about learning. This enables staff to reduce barriers to learning, supporting pupils to make strong progress over time.
- Teachers assess learning and progress accurately and use this information to set suitably challenging work to ensure that pupils are stretched.
- There is careful monitoring of classroom practice by school leaders. Clear guidance is given to all teachers on how to improve their teaching skills through regular training.
- **The school's current staffing complement has the capacity to improve the quality of teaching further to meet the needs of the pupils, and to ensure that pupils make good progress, particularly in English and mathematics.**

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Usually, pupils join the school with low self-esteem as they have been disengaged with

their education. Most pupils successfully re-engage in learning because staff are skilful in helping them to overcome their negative feelings about schooling. As a result, pupils learn to establish a work ethic, and as they begin to succeed they gain in self-confidence.

- Pupils are confident that they have someone to speak to if they have a problem. Staff greet pupils every morning, and pupils have the opportunity to resolve problems before learning starts. One parent stated: **'Having a form tutor that my son can turn to for support and advice has made a huge difference in how he starts his day at school. Staff at the school will always listen to both sides of any story and will always play fair.'**
- Pupils appreciate the wealth of learning opportunities they have and the individual support they receive from staff. Pupils commented, **'It's like one big family where we look after each other.'** Another said, **'I have been to a number of schools but this school has never given up on me.'** Pupils agreed that bullying is extremely rare and were confident it would be dealt with immediately by staff.
- Pupils can identify improvements in their attitudes to school, to their peers and to adults. This is the result of effective work to raise **pupils'** self-esteem and a belief in themselves that they can succeed. They are provided with opportunities to reflect on and learn from their mistakes. **Pupils said that 'staff never give up' in supporting them** and their families.
- The culture and ethos of the school strongly provides a safe, nurturing environment in which pupils can thrive and succeed. Pupils are helped and encouraged to get on better with people of their own age and to understand what they need to do to fit in with others in society.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Throughout the inspection, pupils were mostly polite, respectful, well-mannered and calm to adults and their peers.
- Lessons start punctually. Movement around the school is carefully managed by adults, so there is limited opportunity for negative situations to arise.
- Many pupils settle into the school quickly. They feel self-assured enough to relax, to begin to control their behaviour and to learn strategies to reduce outbursts.
- Staff and pupils enjoy breaktimes together. The high levels of supervision ensure that staff are positive role models, playing football or frisbee with the pupils, or taking the opportunity to find out how pupils are feeling.
- Pupils say that bullying rarely occurs. Staff do much work to ensure that pupils know about the harmful effects of various types of bullying, including cyber bullying. Staff, pupils and the vast majority of parents agree that any serious misbehaviour is dealt with effectively. The school keeps comprehensive monitoring logs and reviews these frequently to analyse trends and patterns.
- Sometimes pupils struggle to cope with the pressures of school life. Staff have a thorough understanding of the factors that influence the behaviour of pupils. They respond quickly and calmly to make sure that disruptions rarely escalate and that pupils are quickly reintegrated into their lessons.
- Fixed-term exclusions are rarely repeated, as pupils understand well how to correct their behaviour.

- The systems for monitoring attendance are robust. Attendance for the vast majority of pupils shows strong improvement from their typically low starting points. However, overall attendance, although improving, remains below that of other schools nationally. This is because a few pupils do not attend as regularly as they should. The school is working hard to address these issues but there remains further work to do. Leaders can confidently account for every pupil on the register.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- **Pupils' attainment** on entry is well below that expected for their age. Most have experienced disruption in their previous schools, including poor attendance, meaning that they have not made the progress expected of them. Many pupils have low self-esteem and low aspirations. They also face barriers to their learning due to their social, emotional and mental health needs.
- From their starting points when they arrive at the school, the vast majority of pupils make good progress across all subjects and year groups. Leaders make sure that they have accurate baseline assessments and half-termly assessment points so that they can plan interventions when pupils fall behind, notably in English and mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils are carefully monitored to ensure that they make good progress in their learning. Their attitude to learning over time shows a noticeable improvement. They demonstrate a genuine interest in their work, resulting in the successful completion of qualifications.
- Pupils who entered the school with little hope of sitting examinations are rightly proud of the progress they make. The curriculum provides appropriate support to ensure that these pupils are challenged to achieve the best outcomes they can.
- A range of Assessment and Qualification Alliance (AQA) unit awards are completed by all pupils, appropriate to their ability. Pupils at key stage 4 gain level 1 and 2 functional skills qualifications in English, mathematics, and information and communication technology, **which represents good progress from individuals' starting points**. Pupils also complete the Northern Council for Further Education (NCFE) certificates and awards. Courses are well matched to individuals' aspirations.
- Pupils develop their reading skills effectively as they progress throughout the school. Pupils mostly read fluently and with understanding. The quality of their handwriting and the presentation of their work develops the longer they are at the school.

Sixth form provision

Good

- All aspects of the sixth form are good. Leaders ensure that the good progress gained by the pupils in the main school continues in the sixth form. Students are provided with the time to consolidate and extend their previous learning, based on their individual needs.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good. Teachers plan a learning programme for each of the students so that it matches their individual needs. They question students effectively to check their understanding, ensuring that misconceptions are rare. Consequently, students make typically good progress in their learning over time.

- Relationships between the staff and students are praiseworthy. These relationships are based on mutual respect. Behaviour is good as staff have a clear understanding of each individual student and their personalised needs.
- Students value their own common room. They appreciate the trust of staff to use this facility, which enables them to further develop their social skills and independence. For example, they welcome the opportunity to budget for their own drinks and snacks and to socialise with their friends.
- Students follow a range of accredited courses where they make good progress in their learning. They demonstrate an enthusiasm to succeed, taking responsibility for their own learning. The study programmes are personalised and monitored by staff so that suitable **adjustments can be made in response to individual students' needs**. These arrangements are suitable for the students who have missed significant areas of learning during their compulsory school years.
- Careers advice, guidance and support are available to enable students to make well-informed decisions about their future. This includes opportunities for students to complete a mock interview and a curriculum vitae. Pupils attend the national skills show in Birmingham, where they are provided with extensive information about future pathways available to them.
- Work experience is an essential part of the provision. Students have appropriate experiences of the world of work and opportunities to visit college and apprenticeship placements.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education when they leave. Developing the resilience and interpersonal skills of pupils is a strong feature of the successful transition programme.
- The school is expanding the suite of qualifications on offer to include a range of GCSE qualifications and other accredited courses for pupils, where deemed appropriate. These courses are not yet fully embedded.
- The school has robust procedures in place for safeguarding.

School details

Unique reference number	138138
DfE registration number	926/6002
Inspection number	10046996

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

Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	10 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	26
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	7
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Unique Care Homes
Chair	Lindsey Blickhem
Headteacher	Jo Murray
Annual fees (day pupils)	£12,000 to £40,000
Telephone number	01553 827848
Website	www.westfieldhouseschool.co.uk
Email address	Jo.murray@westfieldhouseschool.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	5–7 July 2016

Information about this school

- Westfield House is an independent special school run by Unique Care Homes.
- The school is registered with the Department for Education (DfE) to admit a maximum of 32 pupils. There are 26 pupils on roll, with 7 students in the sixth form.
- The school specialises in provision for pupils who have social, emotional and mental health needs. Most pupils have education, health and care plans. Many have been

excluded from their previous schools or have experienced a breakdown in school placement allied to social problems. The majority have some degree of delay in their learning.

- Pupils are placed by local authorities, currently from Norfolk and Cambridgeshire.
- Almost all pupils are from a White British background and their first language is English.
- A large majority of pupils are disadvantaged and are therefore eligible for additional pupil premium funding.
- The school uses no alternative provision.
- The headteacher was appointed in March 2016.

Information about this inspection

- **When the school was inspected in July 2016, a standard inspection, the school's overall effectiveness** required improvement and two of the independent school standards were not met.
- Following the standard inspection, the DfE issued the school with a warning notice and required an action plan to be submitted. The action plan submitted by the proprietor in May 2017 was not deemed acceptable.
- At the progress monitoring inspection in October 2017, the school did not meet three of the independent school standards. The school submitted an action plan to the DfE to address areas for improvement identified in the inspection. This was evaluated by Ofsted in February 2018. The proposed action plan was deemed acceptable with modifications.
- The DfE commissioned Ofsted to consider, as part of this current standard inspection, the **school's progress in meeting independent school standards** that were judged to be unmet at the previous inspection in July 2016.
- The inspection was conducted with one **day's notice**.
- The inspector observed learning in every class. All observations were conducted jointly with leaders.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, senior staff, staff and governors.
- A telephone conversation was held with a representative of Norfolk Local Authority.
- The inspector met with a group of pupils to listen to their views about the school. The views of other pupils were gathered during lessons and playtimes.
- **A wide range of documentation was examined. This included the school's evaluation of its own performance, the school's development plan, and information relating to pupils' achievement and progress.** Records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding were also scrutinised.
- **There was insufficient response to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View**, for the information to be taken into account in this inspection. However, 12 text messages from parents were taken into account. The inspector spoke to a parent formally during the inspection and took into account one email from a parent.

Inspection team

Stefanie Lipinski-Barltrop, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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