

## Re-assessment Report

Name of School:	West End Academy
Head-teacher:	Mr Chris Johnson
Investors in Pupils Coordinator:	Laura Fidler
Investors in Pupil Assessor:	Malcolm Lister
Date of the Reassessment:	Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> March 2018
Head-teacher's email	cjohnson@wcatrust.org
liPu Coordinator:	fidlerl@westend.wakefield.yhgfl.net
School contact telephone number:	01977 616732
Local Authority / Academy	Wakefield / WCAT

### Context of the school:

Ofsted (2015) described West End as follows:

*'This is an average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are White British. West End Academy became an academy school on 1 October 2013. There have been several changes in teaching staff since the school became an academy, including the headteacher who was appointed in September 2014. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those supported by the pupil premium funding is above the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average.'* This description remains broadly accurate, with low mobility levels another relevant factor for consideration. Inspectors judged the school to be good overall and outstanding in both Leadership and Management and the Behaviour and Safety of pupils. The reassessment request form understandably emphasises that the school serves an area of social and economic deprivation with 38% of pupils entitled to free school meals.

The school website states that *'Our vision at West End Academy is for all our children to be "Learning and Growing Together". We believe this is crucial if every child is to be successful at school and the importance of working as a team in order to achieve great results is always promoted throughout school life'*. The strong sense of teamwork and togetherness invoked in this statement was immediately evident at the school and further confirmed during the reassessment process. Relationships (pupil-pupil, pupil-adult and adult-adult) are of the highest quality.

Investors in Pupils is a key element of the prevailing school culture and school leaders believe that the standard is 'something that works for us' and 'something we are doing all the time'. Staff also confirmed that Investors in Pupils principles are firmly embedded in daily school life and are familiar aspects of the West End approach. They fully support and obviously adhere to the principles of the award, which are underpinned by the aforementioned vision of 'Learning and growing together'. Evidence confirms that all stakeholders are well informed about the standard through newsletters, assemblies, meetings, the website and specific information leaflets.

Parents praised the school's communication systems and the way that children's achievements are

celebrated in school. They feel that their children are really listened to, they are supported and their needs are met, both academic and social and emotional: 'There is always someone you can talk to'... 'He comes home full of energy and boasts about what he has done'. Parents who were interviewed were unstinting in their praise for the school, echoing Ofsted's comment in 2015 that '*Parents' views are very positive*'. A Parents' Feedback Box in the entrance encourages additional comments and suggestions.

Ofsted also commented that '*Governors' partnership in the school's work through their challenge and support has been focal to its success*'. Feedback from this reassessment confirms that this is still the case. They are kept very well informed about all areas of school life through headteacher's reports, newsletters and visits to each school. They fully support Investors in Pupils and appreciate its value to the school. A governor has been interviewed by the School Council and visits to school are a common feature.

The warm, friendly atmosphere was especially impressive and relationships were an obvious strength. Staff members confirmed that morale was high and there was an admirable determination to support the children, whatever their needs. Staff like the children and they like them. Teamwork is effective and CPD remains an important commitment, with staff reflecting positively on both its value and impact: 'we can access support in all sorts of ways' (teacher).

Focused and principled leadership from school leaders sets the tone and ethos for the school and West End also benefits from a highly motivated and proactive Investors in Pupils coordinator who has time allocated to further develop agreed priorities. Exceptional organisation has ensured that the standard is included in the School Development Plan and an action plan is in place for this reassessment. Investors in Pupils also has a clear, up to date presence on the comprehensive, user-friendly school website. Key areas of the standard are clearly exemplified through focused displays, links with school priorities and in confident feedback during interviews with a wide range of stakeholders. All classrooms have specific areas where the Investors in Pupils principles are evidenced in prominent displays.

### **Areas for Development as detailed in the last report**

The school has successfully addressed the areas identified. The youngest children now have School Council representation, governors have greater involvement and financial awareness has been successfully extended.

### **Strengths of the school which support the principles of 'Investors in Pupils'**

#### **Pupil voice and participation**

- The pupil presentation was particularly impressive and helpful. Subsequent questioning of varied groups of pupils confirmed their detailed knowledge of and support for both the Investors in Pupils principles and the ethos and culture underpinning the schools' approach to the standard. Answers and explanations were clear and articulate in all the interview sessions.
- Throughout the assessment pupils and staff confirmed that pupils take responsibility for their environment and fully appreciate the value of learning in an exceptionally clean, tidy and well organised school.
- Throughout the day pupils confirmed that there are a number of ways they can voice their feelings and opinions and that they are always listened to and supported. This was clearly evidenced through the significant improvements to lunchtime arrangements that culminated in new dining hall rules and the approval of a new menu. The pupil application form also catalogues several instances where staff helped to support the desired changes. Feedback confirms high levels of satisfaction with the new arrangements.
- The democratically elected School Council is an additional strength. Councillors take their role seriously and obviously feel that they are making a difference: 'We are definitely listened to'.

Councillors are able to put forward ideas or issues of concern and are fully aware of the attributes they need to carry out their role effectively. They know they have to explain their views and sometimes persuade others that an idea or suggestion is beneficial. They are also confident that they have had an impact, for example in developments at lunchtime. There is also a School Council blog on the website as well as a prominently situated School Council noticeboard.

- The school 'Top Team' had an impressive 37 applications this academic year. Responsibilities include Office Duty, Art and Library Assistants and Buddy Readers. Along with the Junior Leadership Team these two initiatives complement each other successfully and provide support for younger or less confident pupils whilst also providing useful feedback to inform future decisions. Pupils were positive about the impact of each initiative.
- The tour of the school was impressively conducted by two confident and knowledgeable pupils keen to both help a visitor and also highlight specific features of West End's work and approach to Investors in Pupils.
- All classrooms have visible, agreed mission statements that are presented as a charter, contract or promise. Class members sign these statements to reinforce their commitment.

## Learning

Target setting is used effectively. There is a clear and sensible rationale to support target setting procedures and pupils and parents clearly support the schools' strategy. Pupils who were interviewed knew their targets, understood why they were chosen and felt that they were valuable.

- Class targets are discussed at age appropriate levels and displayed in each classroom. Rewards for achieving the targets are discussed with, and much appreciated by the children. Targets are clearly linked to rewards: 'They like the prizes and certificates' (parent).
- Pupils have individual, SMART targets linked to a core subject. Targets are reviewed and renewed systematically on at least a termly basis. 'Targets work' (School Council, unanimously).
- Pupils are articulate about their learning and can talk confidently about the things they enjoy and appreciate at school. A wide range of subjects was mentioned when pupils were asked what they enjoyed most about school. Teachers are clearly sensitive too: 'They make maths less intimidating...' 'They would never humiliate us' ( Years 5 and 6 pupils ).
- Achievements in school are celebrated both in class and in assembly. Pupils enjoy receiving a wide variety of awards that include certificates, stickers and star points linked to specific prizes. Pupils also receive a positive leaf for social, emotional and behavioural achievements that are linked to the Golden Rules strategy. There are also awards for good attendance, including the coveted golden raffle ticket.
- Pupils know that staff attend courses and training and efforts are made to explain why staff have received particular training. The School Council have interviewed staff to find out more about their role and responsibilities in school. Assemblies have been used to provide additional feedback.
- A wide range of extra-curricular clubs and specific opportunities are in place. These include football, hockey, art and athletics. There is also a planned programme of visits such as the residential visit to Robin Wood .
- Parents were effusive about their own child's improved learning; 'Working alongside your child on the "Inspire" mornings is really successful'. They enjoy the positive feedback they receive.
- Feedback and observations confirm that pupils are keen to learn and enjoy the wide range of learning experiences that are provided for them. They know how to seek help and that the staff are

there to support them: 'All the teachers are kind. They show you what to do if you're struggling' ( Infant pupil ).....'Lessons are fun. We don't just get boring things to do' (Year 5 pupil).

- Display is of a high quality and there are abundant impressive examples of imaginative presentation. Display is used effectively to celebrate success and demonstrate high expectations. There is an impressive consistency in quality throughout the school.
- The school has successfully achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark. Other accreditations include the International School Award.

## Behaviour

- *'The behaviour of pupils is outstanding'* (Ofsted 2015). Pupils, parents and staff all believe that behaviour is consistently of a high standard. There is confidence that Ofsted would make the same judgement again and on the assessment day behaviour was outstanding. *'Politeness and good manners are hallmarks of pupils' behaviour around the school'* (Ofsted). Pupils were uniformly polite, friendly and courteous during the assessment day. They recognised that some pupils had problems with their behaviour and felt that they could, and should, be supported: 'The standard is set high and some people need help to get there' (School Council member).
- There is a consistent approach to behaviour management throughout the school and the behaviour policy, on this evidence, is clearly embedded.
- During the assessment there was abundant evidence of excellent relationships within a safe, well organised and positive working environment. Pupils' attitudes and relationships confirmed that they feel safe in school and respond well to the positive feedback, encouragement and rewards they receive. 'I feel very safe. There are lots of safeguarding people' (Year 3 pupil). Parents readily endorsed this view.
- Feedback from pupils, staff and parents confirms that bullying is not tolerated, instances are very rare and action is taken promptly to address any issues.

## School and Class Management including knowledge of school finance

- Reference to Investors in Pupils is evident throughout the school. The logo is highly visible and there is a strong sense of 'permanence' to the standard.
- The school trusts its pupils and they are given many opportunities to take on responsibilities. They value these responsibilities and there were several excellent explanations of roles such as Librarian and Reading Buddy.
- Pupils demonstrated a good, age-appropriate understanding of the school budget and were aware that resources are not finite. A whole school assembly and an interview with the office manager has enhanced financial knowledge. Financial awareness is also encouraged through various fund raising and charity events including Sports Relief and the Crazy Hair day. Pupils may benefit further from considering how money might be saved and by looking at value for money.
- Developing financial understanding is therefore an important focus but is, understandably, a difficult concept for many younger pupils to learn and understand.
- A brief overview of lunchtime indicated that it was calm, purposeful and obviously enjoyable for the pupils observed.

## Attendance

- Ofsted commented on the 'quick improvement' in attendance since academisation and the challenge it presents is addressed positively and purposefully through a wide range of rewards and initiatives. The website stresses the importance of attendance and describes the excellent rewards system that underpins the school's attendance strategy.
- Attendance is rigorously monitored and any vulnerable children and families are supported. Staff are thorough in all aspects of their approach to sustaining high levels of attendance. Last year there was a reduction in persistent absentees, thus demonstrating the impact of the school's strategy.
- Weekly class attendance is celebrated and rewarded. Parents also confirmed that their children wanted to come to school and that 'he'd like to come in the holidays really'.
- Pupils were clear about links between attendance and learning and enjoy coming to West End because of the wide range of exciting learning and fun activities the school provides for them. Pupil interviews indicate that they clearly appreciate what the staff do for them.

## Induction

- Pupils explained the importance of welcoming new pupils and staff into school.
- Every class from Year 1 has developed their own age appropriate booklet that they share with any new members and visitors. Booklets have been developed through SEAL lessons and provide a range of sensible and appropriate information. They provide a useful, attractive resource.
- Induction is taken very seriously and there is a full induction programme for all new pupils and staff even though very few pupils join the school mid-year.

## Areas for development

*Please note these actions are compulsory and areas must be acted upon to ensure that the standard is maintained in the future.*

Although every effort has been taken to make parents aware of their child's targets it is important that reminders and updates are provided in order that parents can offer continuing support.