

West Leigh Junior School

Address: Ronald Hill Grove, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 2JB

Unique reference number (URN): 142753

Inspection report: 21 April 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Pupils are incredibly well prepared for their next steps in education. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. Over time, pupils consistently achieve highly in national tests. This impressive achievement is reflected in the knowledge of pupils and the work they produce in a range of subjects.

Pupils quickly secure the important building blocks of knowledge they need across subjects. This enables them to tackle more complex and challenging work. Pupils do this very well. They make intelligent links between what they are learning and what they already know. For example, in history, pupils make relevant and meaningful comparisons between the different periods of history they study. Pupils frequently produce work of a very high quality. In computing, pupils expertly apply their knowledge to produce complex computer programmes, for example. Across the school, pupils develop into incredibly knowledgeable and articulate young people ready for future learning.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders have clear systems in place to identify when a pupil's attendance falls below where it should. This happens very rarely. Should it happen, leaders take appropriate action. This helps to remove barriers pupils face. Pupils love being at school and attend regularly. As a result, both overall absence and persistent absence are consistently low.

Leaders have incredibly high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Staff understand their part in creating this culture. Pupils appreciate how calm the school is. From the playground, through the corridors and across classrooms pupils benefit from routines that are embedded into the life of the school. This helps pupils to feel safe, secure and ready to focus on their learning. Predictable and consistent routines are particularly positive for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils learn well, because they know what to expect. Should a pupil require a bit more help with their behaviour, caring and knowledgeable staff do this very well. This means standards of behaviour are consistently high across the school. This is a school where pupils are happy, confident and ambitious learners. It is also a school where bullying is incredibly rare. Pupils know staff will deal with this should it happen.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have a meticulous understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching. They have designed a highly ambitious curriculum that sets out clearly the knowledge pupils need to secure across subjects. Leaders provide staff with targeted and specific training and guidance. Consequently, staff have high quality subject knowledge which enables them to teach the curriculum as leaders want. The 'West Leigh Way' is understood and embedded into daily teaching practice. This can be seen in the way staff quickly identify and address misconceptions pupils have. It is also shown in the way staff expertly challenge pupils to deepen their understanding across subjects. All of this helps pupils to make purposeful and relevant connections between existing and new knowledge.

Staff are experts in helping pupils who have not yet mastered the important building blocks of knowledge needed in reading, writing and mathematics. High quality teaching is supported ably by focussed interventions for those who need it. As a result, pupils secure these essential blocks very well. This helps pupils when they encounter more complex learning. For example, pupils understand how to use their knowledge of multiplication facts when solving tricky problems during mathematics lessons.

Inclusion

Strong standard 

Leaders identify the specific and changing needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They provide staff with highly relevant and impactful training that enables staff to put in place the right support for these pupils. For example, focussed and specific interventions help pupils to close gaps in knowledge. When needed, the school is quick to seek support from external agencies to provide more specialist support for pupils with SEND.

Leaders carefully check the impact of the support they put in place. This enables them to understand where to adapt strategies and any extra help. They work swiftly and skilfully to tailor their approaches should they need to. They do this very successfully. As a result pupils with SEND achieve incredibly well.

Leaders provide purposeful training to staff in how to support other pupils who may face barriers to their learning or wellbeing. For example, training on new approaches to support disadvantaged pupils to improve their writing has upskilled staff. This is a key focus from leaders' well-considered use of the pupil premium funding. Staff ably help pupils who have gaps in their writing knowledge to close these gaps. Consequently, disadvantaged pupils achieve highly too.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard 

The decisions that leaders take are driven by a moral purpose to do what is right for pupils. School and trust leaders have a clear and thorough understanding of the context of the school. They know what the school does well and which areas to further improve. This helps leaders to never rest on their laurels. Leaders at all levels show a clear and consistent drive to continuously improve. This can be seen in the way they make intelligent improvements to the curriculum. It is also shown in the introduction of new systems and initiatives to further strengthen the offer pupils receive. These tweaks will help leaders to further strengthen the high-quality education pupils benefit greatly from.

Trustees are knowledgeable in how to check on the work of leaders. They carefully analyse a wide range of evidence to both support and challenge leaders. This is done very well. Trustees follow up on key priorities to ensure they have the impact leaders want them to. They also oversee statutory duties to ensure these are met.

High-quality professional development for staff underpins much of leaders' work. This has embedded a culture where staff continually seek to improve their practice and subject knowledge. Staff appreciate the way leaders help them to be their very best. This also helps staff to manage their own workload and wellbeing. Staff are incredibly proud to work at the

school. Parents are equally positive of how the school supports their child. They value the support and academic challenge the school consistently provides.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

The personal development offer is extensive and carefully designed to enable pupils to thrive. Leaders place a high priority on the important values pupils should live by. Assemblies link seamlessly with the curriculum to help pupils to deepen their understanding of these values. This helps build in pupils a strong sense of right and wrong. Pupils are reflective when discussing the importance of showing respect towards those who are different to them. They understand why showing integrity is a crucial value that will serve them well in later life. Pupils show a clear moral purpose in how to support others. Pupils revel in their many roles helping others such as reading ambassadors or school councillors. They are proud of how they support pupils.

Leaders have carefully designed a personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum so pupils build on their knowledge in a coherent way. The PSHE curriculum has been carefully tailored to meet the context of the school. Pupils secure an impressive grasp of knowledge. They make insightful links between learning such as how to build healthy and safe relationships including when they are online. Pupils display an impressive maturity when exploring sensitive topics in PSHE lessons.

Leaders create purposeful opportunities for pupils to learn new and develop existing talents and interests. These evolve and adapt to meet the changing needs and aspirations of pupils. Leaders are meticulous in overseeing the impact of the wider offer. This helps them to ensure that any barriers pupils may face are removed. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit fully from what the school provides. These opportunities are not only broad but also rich and highly impactful. The school career day is a highlight for many pupils. Meeting inspirational people ignites pupils' passions for their futures. Across all aspects of school life, pupils are very well prepared for secondary school and life beyond.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils thrive at West Leigh Junior School. They arrive in the morning excited to meet their friends and teachers on the playground to chat about the day ahead. Pupils benefit from the razor-sharp routines that are part of the fabric of the school. As soon as the morning whistle is blown, this busy school becomes a place of learning. Pupils settle incredibly quickly into their work. 'Maths mates' from Year 6 delight in greeting younger pupils in the hall to help them solve tricky mathematics problems. Across classrooms, pupils are eager to begin their day.

Staff cater incredibly well for pupils who face barriers to their learning and wellbeing. When a pupil requires additional support, highly trained staff provide this. This helps pupils to quickly close any gaps in knowledge they have. Staff also know how to identify where pupils may have barriers towards attending school. Well-considered support is provided to help remove these barriers. Pupils want to attend school and the vast majority do so regularly.

Pupils look after each other. Bullying is incredibly rare and swiftly dealt with should it happen. Pupils live and breathe their 'golden values' in all they do. Integrity is something that is especially important to pupils. They show this in the way they conduct themselves throughout the day. Pupils leap at the chance to hone existing and learn new talents. The quiz club are proud to represent the school in competitions at Oxford University. The school football team delight in sharing their many triumphs in county tournaments. Pupils grow into highly respectful, confident and resilient people. They simply love to learn across the carefully designed curriculum. Pupils aspire to become the next generation of historians, musicians, gymnasts and more. They achieve incredibly well and leave thoroughly prepared for their next stages of learning.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure their oversight of more recently introduced initiatives and systems enables them to adapt future priorities as needed to further enhance the high-quality offer pupils receive across all aspects of the school.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Portico Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Cheryl Woolf, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Karen Packer.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the principal, the two vice principals, the special educational needs coordinator, staff, the CEO, the director of learning and teaching and trustees.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The principal joined the school in June 2024.

The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Principal: Mark Aggus

Lead inspector:

Michael Williams, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Craige Brown, Ofsted Inspector

Georgina Nutton, Ofsted Inspector

Danny Wagstaff, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 21 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

528

Well above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

512

Well above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

7.01%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

1.52%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

6.63%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well below average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	80%	61%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	84%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	75%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	80%	60%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	88%	74%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	89%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	87%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	89%	73%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	91%	72%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	89%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	93%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	91%	71%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	85%	73%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	88%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	82%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	84%	73%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	54%	46%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	71%	47%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	50%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	38%	44%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	74%	62%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	71%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	88%	62%	Above
2022/23 (final)	69%	60%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	71%	59%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	71%	59%	Above
2023/24 (final)	75%	58%	Above
2022/23 (final)	69%	58%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	69%	60%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	79%	61%	Above
2023/24 (final)	75%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	54%	59%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	54%	68%	-13 pp
2024/25 (revised)	71%	69%	2 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	67%	-17 pp
2022/23 (final)	38%	66%	-28 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	74%	80%	-5 pp
2024/25 (revised)	71%	81%	-9 pp
2023/24 (final)	88%	80%	8 pp
2022/23 (final)	69%	78%	-9 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	71%	78%	-6 pp
2024/25 (revised)	71%	78%	-7 pp
2023/24 (final)	75%	78%	-3 pp
2022/23 (final)	69%	77%	-8 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	69%	80%	-11 pp
2024/25 (revised)	79%	81%	-2 pp
2023/24 (final)	75%	79%	-4 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	54%	79%	-25 pp

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	3.4%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.0%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.4%	5.9%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	5.2%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	6.5%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	8.0%	16.2%	Below

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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