

Material change inspection report

5 June 2025

Westfield School

Oakfield Road

Gosforth

Newcastle upon Tyne

NE3 4HS

The Independent Schools Inspectorate is appointed by the Department for Education to inspect association independent schools in England. Our inspections report on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards and other applicable regulatory requirements are met, collectively referred to in this report as 'the Standards'.

Inspection outcome

The school has requested a material change to become co-educational from ages 3 to 11.

The school is likely to meet the independent school Standards if the material change is implemented. It is recommended that the material change be approved.

Inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

ISSR paragraphs 2, 2A and 3(j)

1. Leaders ensure that a written curriculum policy is in place. This is supported by appropriate schemes of work and detailed plans to meet the age, aptitudes and needs of each pupil. Teachers' planning includes a range of material to extend pupils' interests, knowledge and skills relevant to both male and female pupils. Plans contain an appropriate sequence of knowledge and skills to promote pupils' linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social skills, and physical, aesthetic and creative education.
2. Leaders provide a suitable personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education for pupils. They ensure that curriculum content is suitable for pupils' ages and that it promotes pupils' understanding of difference and the importance of tolerance and respect. Staff training is scheduled to ensure appropriate planning to teach PSHE to boys as well as girls if the material change is implemented.
3. Leaders ensure that an appropriate curriculum for relationships and sex education (RSE) is implemented effectively through the school's PSHE programme. Staff consult parents about this, and they share information about the content covered on an annual basis. A written policy is on the school's website so that parents are informed about the content of the curriculum. Staff have scheduled time and INSET to develop appropriate plans to teach RSE to boys as well as girls if the material change is implemented.
4. Throughout the primary school, lessons are well planned and effectively taught. Staff use teaching methods that best match pupils' learning needs and stage of development. For example, they ensure that pupils are taught subject-specific vocabulary to aid their understanding of new words prior to learning in lessons, such as in mathematics, where pupils were introduced to the properties and names of different triangles.
5. Well-trained staff ensure that children in the early years access thoughtfully planned activities and a range of play opportunities. Staff are adept at developing children's communication, language, early reading and writing skills through high-quality interactions. Children develop their gross and fine motor skills through well-chosen activities that involve using pipettes and scissors, as well as playing with building toys such as Lego and marble runs. Staff use assessment to identify where some children need extra help or support. By the end of Reception, children are well prepared for the transition into Year 1.
6. Staff know pupils well and they adopt a consistent approach to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including those who have education, health and care (EHC) plans. Leaders monitor the implementation of individual support plans regularly. Pupils and their parents share the writing of individual support plans, which are reviewed annually, or sooner when new information is received, such as through a new external assessment. Staff understand

pupils' different needs and how to help them. The support they provide is prompt and effective to help ensure that pupils access learning and make good progress across the full range of curriculum subjects. Pupils who demonstrate higher prior attainment are given the opportunities they need to extend their learning.

7. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are identified on entry to the school and offered support both individually, through one-to-one sessions, and within the classroom setting. Leaders assess the acquisition of language frequently and adapt support and provision in response to this. Pupils are provided with appropriate support, such as through digital resources and translated text. As a result, pupils who speak EAL make good progress and access the full curriculum.
8. Staff demonstrate secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. Leaders have planned appropriate staff training for the introduction of boys into the school. Leaders ensure that a range of high-quality resources is available to support teaching. They have plans in place to ensure that resources, such as equipment for physical education (PE), are suitable for the introduction of boys. They have similarly planned an audit of the curriculum to ensure that the needs of all pupils continue to be met if the material change is implemented.
9. An appropriate assessment framework is in place. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully so that teachers are informed about the progress each pupil is making. This informs teaching so that individual needs continue to be met consistently. Leaders have clear plans to analyse the results of the different cohorts in the school. For instance, assessing whether the progress of boys, from their starting points, is in line with expectations.
10. Throughout the junior school, pupils are provided with regular opportunities for outdoor and practical learning to offer a different learning environment. Leaders provide pupils with an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities so that they develop new interests and skills. In golf, for example, pupils learn how to position their hands and feet when putting. In the mindfulness club, pupils learn to relax and reflect and develop their positivity. Leaders have identified areas to develop the extra-curricular programme should boys join the school.
11. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

ISSR paragraph 5(b)(vi)

12. Leaders ensure that throughout the curriculum, PSHE and assemblies, pupils learn about respect, different cultures, faiths and traditions, through the choice of reading books or by learning about different countries in different continents. Pupils are taught about democracy and practise this when they vote for form captains and the head prefect.
13. In schemes of work, leaders have identified where gender-neutral and inclusive source material can be used. Leaders undertake an annual audit to ensure coverage is appropriate and that balanced views are presented. They have identified, through self-evaluation, their strengths and areas for development.
14. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

ISSR paragraph 7(a) and (b)

15. Leaders ensure that members of the safeguarding team receive suitable training and have the knowledge they need to enable them to fulfil their roles effectively. Leaders promote a robust safeguarding culture and ensure that all staff and governors receive ongoing safeguarding training and updates. Policies and procedures for safeguarding are up to date and reflect statutory guidance. Governors' monitoring of the school's arrangements ensures consistent and effective practice.
16. Staff have a secure understanding of the importance of safeguarding, and they know how to report any concerns about pupils or staff. The safeguarding team keeps detailed records of any concerns, and they record clearly the reasons for the decisions and actions they take. Leaders liaise effectively with outside agencies to access additional support for pupils if required. Leaders similarly ensure that pupils can access support through the school's pastoral system.
17. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

ISSR paragraph 23

18. Suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for pupils of all ages. Nursery classrooms have nearby toilets with separate cubicles. For children in Years 1 to 6, suitable arrangements are in place to provide separate toilets and changing facilities for boys and girls.
19. A medical room caters for the needs of pupils who are ill or injured; it has appropriate washing facilities and is close to a toilet. Leaders have a thorough system in place for administering first aid and medicines. Appropriate records are maintained.
20. Premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety requirements. Acoustic conditions and both internal and external lighting are suitable. The provision of drinking water is adequate. Sufficient outdoor space is available for physical education and play for both boys and girls.
21. Leaders promote a thorough and systematic approach to health and safety. Specific training for health and safety means that leaders, and the governor with health and safety oversight, have effective knowledge and understanding so that health and safety practices are managed well. Required checks are carried out in a timely manner and training certificate dates are recorded.
22. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 6. Provision of information

ISSR paragraph 32(1)(c)

23. The safeguarding policy is available on the school website.
24. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standard if the material change is implemented.

Part 8. Quality of leadership and management of schools

ISSR paragraph 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c), 34(2)

25. Leaders demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school Standards are met consistently.
26. Governors maintain suitable oversight of the school to assure themselves that Standards are met. Governor committees meet with leaders regularly and review policies and procedures to assure themselves that they are implemented in practice. They scrutinise reports that leaders provide and meet regularly with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) to assure themselves that the arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
27. Leaders have planned effectively for the admission of boys into the primary school. They have appropriately considered changes to the curriculum, resourcing, staff deployment and staff training.
28. Leaders actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.
29. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

School details

School	Westfield School
Department for Education number	391/6012
Registered charity number	528143
Address	Westfield School Oakfield Road Gosforth Newcastle Upon Tyne NE3 4HS
Phone number	0191 255 3980
Email address	westfield@westfield.newcastle.sch.uk
Website	www.westfield.newcastle.sch.uk
Proprietor	Northumbrian Education Trust
Chair	Mrs Jackie Rowley
Headteacher	Mr Neil Walker
Age range	3 to 18
Number of pupils	191
Number of children in the early years	15
Date of previous inspection	19 January 2023

Information about the school

31. Westfield School is an independent day school for female pupils located in Gosforth, a residential suburb of Newcastle. It was founded by a group of parents in 1960 and is governed by the Northumbrian Educational Trust. The school is a member of Round Square, an international group of schools which share the same holistic approach to education. The school comprises the junior house for pupils aged 3 to 11; the senior house for those aged 11 to 16; and a sixth form.
32. There are 15 children in the early years, comprising a Nursery and a Reception class.
33. The school has identified 60 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Fifteen pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
34. The school has identified 26 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL).
35. The school states that its aims are to prepare its pupils to be confident adults in the wider world through the promotion of the Round Square ideals, including leadership, democracy and environmentalism. It seeks to make learning enjoyable and meaningful and to enable every pupil's character to develop to the full.

Purpose of the material change

Inspectors carried out this inspection following an application made by the school to the DfE to make a material change to the school's provision to be co-educational in the junior section. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about whether the school is likely to meet the Independent School Standards if the material change is implemented.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

5 June 2025

36. Two reporting inspectors visited the school for one day.

37. Inspection activities included

- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school and information available on the school's website
- tour of the school site to ensure that the planned changes would accommodate the material change
- discussions with the chair of governors
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils and staff
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school
- scrutiny of information published on the school's website.

How are association independent schools in England inspected?

- The Department for Education is the regulator for independent schools in England.
- ISI is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect independent schools in England, which are members of associations in membership of the Independent Schools Council.
- ISI inspections report to the Department for Education on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards, the EYFS statutory framework requirements, the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools and any other relevant Standards are met.
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