

Inspection of Wreake Valley Academy

Parkstone Road, Syston, Leicester, Leicestershire LE7 1LY

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 February 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

The school has improved considerably since its previous inspection. New leaders have raised staff's expectations of what pupils can learn and achieve. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and know that staff want them to do their best. An increased number of students choose to continue their studies in the sixth form. Pupils understand the simple message that 'every lesson counts, and everybody matters'.

New behaviour routines help pupils get to lessons on time and concentrate on their learning. Low-level disruption in lessons is uncommon. Pupils say that most teachers deal with incidents of poor behaviour fairly and consistently. They appreciate help from staff to improve their conduct, when necessary.

Pupils are generally polite and respectful. They get on well together and enjoy positive relationships with adults. Most pupils are confident that staff will resolve any issues of bullying swiftly. Pupils feel safe in school and know that there is always someone they can talk with if they want to share a concern.

Most parents and carers are positive about the school and the way it has improved. However, many would like to know more about what their children are learning and how well they are achieving.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance have communicated a clear vision for the school. Leaders' high expectations for pupils' behaviour and learning have created a positive culture. Staff have welcomed these changes and know what leaders want to achieve. Staff and leaders are committed to continuing to improve all aspects of the school.

Leaders have redesigned the curriculum. Pupils in key stage 3 have more time to study a broad variety of subjects in sufficient depth. Sixth-form students enjoy choosing their courses from an increased range of subjects and qualifications. Most of these students aspire to attend university or secure higher-level apprenticeships.

Curriculum leaders are identifying the most important subject content they want pupils to know, and when they should learn it. This work has progressed well in some subjects. In English, science, and art and design, curriculums are well developed. This helps pupils secure their knowledge and skills. Leaders are still developing the curriculums in other subjects. In geography, history and French, leaders are checking that their key stage 3 plans are ambitious. They are using extra curriculum time to ensure that pupils do not have gaps in their knowledge.

Teachers use their subject-specialist knowledge well. They include plenty of opportunities for pupils to revisit previous learning. Pupils say this helps them remember important information and correct any misconceptions. Most pupils are keen to engage with their learning, sharing their ideas and offering to read aloud in

class. However, the quality of their written work is inconsistent. Not all teachers insist that pupils present their work neatly and spell subject-specific terms accurately.

A well-resourced library encourages pupils' love of reading. Knowledgeable staff provide effective support to pupils who struggle to read well. This support helps pupils read more confidently and fluently, so that they can access the full curriculum.

Most teachers support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to access the curriculum appropriately. Pupils with SEND in the specially resourced provision benefit from a curriculum that is aligned closely to the rest of the school. Pupils attending this provision are positive about how staff help them learn. Some parents of pupils with SEND are concerned that leaders do not communicate with them well enough about their children's needs.

The pandemic has had a negative impact on the attendance of some pupils. Attendance procedures are helping these pupils come to school more often. The number of pupils excluded from school is declining.

The personal development programme is well planned. Pupils learn the importance of being resilient and learn how to look after their mental health. They understand the risks posed by knife crime. Sixth-form students explore the differences between terrorism and extremism. Extra-curricular opportunities are restarting, including rehearsals for the musical production of 'Guys and Dolls'. The provision for careers education is developing. Pupils in Years 10 and 12 will benefit from work placements later this year.

Those responsible for governance are aspirational for the school and the community it serves. They are well informed and provide leaders with appropriate support. Staff feel valued. They say that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being. Most parents are supportive of the school and recognise the positive improvements made by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that the school's safeguarding procedures help to keep pupils safe. They have increased the number of staff in the safeguarding team to ensure that pupils get the support they need.

Staff are well trained. They know how to spot that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Leaders take prompt action when staff report concerns. They work closely with external agencies to get pupils the right help. Pupils' safeguarding records are detailed.

Leaders' safeguarding checks of alternative providers are rigorous. Trust leaders check the suitability of staff carefully before they start working at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently well planned and sequenced in some subjects, such as geography, history and French. It is not yet fully clear what pupils should learn, and when, in these subjects, to build their knowledge over time. However, it is clear that leaders have begun to review and plan the curriculum in these subjects and are making any necessary amendments in response to the pandemic. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.
- Communication by leaders with parents is sometimes not as effective as it could be. Some parents say they do not know what their child is learning or how well their child is doing. Information about the needs of pupils with SEND is sometimes not shared with parents. Leaders need to ensure that they keep parents well informed about pupils' learning and achievements. Leaders should ensure that parents of pupils with SEND know their child's needs and how they are being supported to access the curriculum.
- Teachers do not have consistently high expectations of the quality of pupils' written work. Not all pupils present their work well. Teachers often do not make sure that pupils spell subject-specific terms accurately. Leaders should ensure that teachers consistently expect pupils to take pride in producing accurate, well-presented work.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	137983
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10211657
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	885
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	167
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Stephen Cotton
Headteacher	Tim Marston
Website	https://www.wreake.bepschools.org/
Dates of previous inspection	9 and 10 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined the Bradgate Education Partnership in September 2018.
- The headteacher took up the position in March 2020.
- A local advisory board was established in autumn 2020. This board is shared with another secondary school in the multi-academy trust.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with communication and interaction needs. There are 11 pupils with SEND registered to attend this provision, aged between 11 and 16 years old. All pupils who attend this provision have an education, health and care plan. This provision opened in September 2020.
- The school uses six unregistered alternative providers. These are: First Class Tailored Solutions Ltd, Generation Youth, Life Learning Leicester, Melton and South Charnwood Inclusion Partnership, Melton Learning Hub and Michael Corker

Fishing Project. The school also uses The Children's Hospital School, which is a registered alternative provider.

- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the head of school and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with the chair of the local advisory board and the chair of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors did deep dives in five subjects: English, mathematics, geography, art and design, and business studies. For each deep dive, inspectors met with curriculum leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers of the lessons visited, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. On the second day of the inspection, inspectors reviewed pupils' workbooks, visited lessons and reviewed curriculum plans in a wider range of subjects. Inspectors spoke with some pupils about reading and listened to them read.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from Years 7, 9 and 11. They spoke with some pupils with SEND and some pupils who have been excluded from school for a fixed period. Inspectors met with a group of sixth-form students. They spoke with pupils informally and observed the behaviour of pupils during social times.
- Inspectors visited the specially resourced provision for pupils with communication and interaction needs and spoke with pupils who attend there.
- Inspectors visited two of the unregistered alternative providers used by the school. They spoke with other providers on the telephone.
- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements by reviewing the school's record of pre-employment checks, holding discussions with leaders, staff and pupils and reviewing documentation relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors took note of the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. They spoke with one parent on the telephone. Inspectors also considered the results of the Ofsted staff survey and the Ofsted pupil survey.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plan. They considered information about pupils' attendance, behaviour and exclusions, and the wider curriculum.

Inspection team

Rachel Tordoff, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Paul Sweeney

Ofsted Inspector

Vanessa Stanley

Ofsted Inspector

Janis Warren

Ofsted 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.

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/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: 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
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022