

De Warenne Academy

Gardens Lane, Conisbrough, Doncaster DN12 3JY

Inspection dates 24–25 November 2015

Overall effectiveness **Requires improvement**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Senior leaders have not taken effective steps to improve pupils’ achievement. Actions taken have not resulted in sustained or rapid improvement since the last inspection.
- Middle leaders are not all skilled enough to improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better.
- The quality of teaching, although improving, is not consistently good across subjects and within some subjects.
- Attainment at Key Stage 4 is not improving fast enough because some groups of pupils – disadvantaged pupils, boys and middle ability pupils – have not made the progress needed to achieve well.
- Governors and trustees have not challenged leaders about the academy’s performance rigorously enough to bring about sustained improvement across a range of subjects.
- Leadership and provision in the sixth form require improvement because learners do not make enough progress, especially in academic qualifications.
- Pupils do not show positive attitudes to learning consistently. Some lose interest in their learning when they are not closely monitored.

The school has the following strengths

- The quality of the academy’s work to enhance the well-being of pupils and prepare them well for life in modern Britain is good. Pupils have good knowledge about British society, learn how to lead healthy lives, how to recognise risk and keep themselves safe.
- Pupils behave well during social time and when moving around the academy. Bullying is rare and dealt with well when it occurs. Pupils are adamant that they are well cared for and feel safe and secure at school.
- Governors, the Principal and senior leaders successfully convey their vision and aspirations for pupils. Staff are highly motivated as a result. Staff are committed to providing good provision to ensure pupils’ well-being and achievement.
- The Schools Partnership Trust Academies (Trust) provides a range of support to the academy. This is leading to stronger leadership and better teaching.
- The academy’s arrangements to safeguard pupils are effective.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in all key stages, by:
 - ensuring that teachers use all the assessment information available to plan lessons, with precision, to challenge all groups of pupils so that they make at least good and better progress
 - ensuring that planned learning deepens thinking and understanding as well improving knowledge and skills
 - putting in place a programme that develops teachers' lesson-planning skills to ensure that lessons take full account of the different needs of pupils, especially of boys, disadvantaged and the most able.

- Improve the quality of leadership, including the sixth form, so that systems to check the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' progress are used effectively, by:
 - ensuring senior leaders and governors check regularly that the systems they have put in place to monitor pupils' progress and the quality of teaching are used robustly
 - ensuring all subject leaders use information from checks to challenge teachers effectively to improve the quality of planning and pupils' learning
 - putting in place training that develops the skills of middle leaders to coach and mentor teachers and challenge their performance.

An external review of the academy's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders have not pursued steps taken to improve the quality of teaching learning and assessment with enough rigour to bring about required improvements. As a result, attainment at Key Stage 4 has not improved quickly enough and some groups of pupils, especially boys, disadvantaged and most-able pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Governors and trustees have not held senior leaders to account rigorously enough for the inconsistent and slow improvement in pupils' achievement.
- Senior leaders have introduced systems to challenge the effectiveness of teaching across subject areas. However, they do not hold middle leaders to account well enough to make sure that teachers take effective actions to improve the quality and consistency of their teaching. This leads to significant variability in the quality of teaching across subjects and, in some cases, within subjects.
- The increasingly strong and refined systems to check pupils' learning are not used effectively, or quickly enough, by all middle leaders to identify when pupils are underachieving. As a consequence, pupils' progress is slowed.
- The Principal and governors of the academy have a strong vision that focuses on ensuring that pupils are well cared for and given a rich range of learning opportunities that prepare them well for life in modern Britain. Leaders have high aspirations for their pupils. As a result, staff are motivated and reflect leaders' vision for the school in their day-to-day work. This rubs off on pupils, who have positive views for their futures.
- Leaders have planned and checked that all pupils learn about a range of faith beliefs, different life styles and cultures and help pupils to recognise, respect and be tolerant of others. Planned learning helps pupils understand and lead healthy lifestyles and how public services play a central role in modern society. Pupils learn about prejudice associated with race, religious beliefs, and sexual orientation. As a consequence, pupils are well-informed, know about risks, including the use of the internet, and radicalisation and extremism. Together, these support pupils well in understanding fundamental British values.
- Carefully planned careers guidance and advice helps pupils make choices for their next steps in education and training and raises pupils' aspirations.
- The leadership of pastoral care, including work with other partner schools such as St. Wilfrid's Academy which the academy uses to offer alternative provision for a small number of pupils, is effective. As a result, pupils say that they get effective help when they have a problem and there is always someone with whom they can talk. Similarly, leaders ensure that they work effectively with other teams and agencies, such as social services and child and adolescent mental health services, to help keep pupils safe, healthy and able to access learning.
- Leaders have made changes to the curriculum so that it offers a broad and balanced range of academic and vocational courses at Key Stage 4 and 5. Vocational courses are well-led and pupils achieve well in these subject areas. In other subject areas, changes to the curriculum that have the potential to improve achievement have not been fully matched by consistently effective teaching.
- The academy's arrangements to safeguard pupils are underpinned by up-to-date training for safeguarding leaders and the whole staff. As a consequence, staff know about the risks that pupils face and what to do if they have a concern.
- The academy's use of additional funding to improve the literacy, numeracy and language of pupils entering the academy with standards below those expected for their age in English and mathematics is effective. Almost all pupils finish Year 7 working at levels in mathematics and English that will enable them to access the secondary curriculum.
- The academy's use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils leads to improvements in performance across a range of subjects. However, the gains made are not sustained over time. As a result, disadvantaged pupils do not continue to make good enough progress and the gaps in their achievement, compared with those of other pupils in the academy, are not closing fast enough.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors know the school and its context well. They receive information about pupils' progress regularly and understand it. However, governors are not effective in challenging leaders so that changes required to bring about improvements in pupils' achievement are followed through and maintained consistently. While improvements have been made, for example in English, the earlier improvements in mathematics

have not been sustained.

- Governors scrutinise plans and outcomes of interventions to help disadvantaged pupils close the gaps in achievement with other pupils in the academy. However, they have not pursued their challenge rigorously enough to make sure that improvement is sustained and leads to better outcomes for this group of pupils.
- Governors have taken robust steps when teacher performance falls well below their expectations and have made significant appointments to strengthen subject leadership in some subjects. The impact of these changes is beginning to be seen in the progress that current pupils are making.
- Governors scrutinise recommendations for pay awards that are part of the system for setting targets for teachers to improve. The Trust makes arrangements for the setting of targets for the Principal. They do not grant pay awards when targets have not been met.
- Governors have a clear understanding of their statutory duties, in particular about safeguarding. They are well-informed and use their training to appoint only suitable adults to work with pupils. They make sure all the required checks are carried out and recorded carefully. They carry out regular visits to make sure that the single central register and records of safeguarding checks are kept up to date.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The effectiveness of teaching is variable, including in the sixth form. Not all teachers make the same good use of assessment information to plan lessons precisely enough to engage and improve learning for all groups of pupils. As a result, all pupils do not make as much progress as they should.
- Too frequently, learning activities do not stretch the most-able pupils in classes. As a result, while they acquire more knowledge, they do not deepen their thinking or understanding quickly enough. This slows their learning across subjects.
- Effective teaching leads to effective learning and swift progress when teachers plan and challenge accurately. For example, in a science class in Key Stage 4, carefully thought through activities and targeted questions helped pupils respond successfully and with increasing understanding. This enabled them to give answers at higher grade levels.
- Some boys and disadvantaged pupils show that they are willing to learn but, when they are not engaged by learning activities teachers set or are not challenged enough, they lose interest and the pace of learning slows. Over time, this leads to a large gap in attainment between these two groups and others in the school.
- Recent improvements across most subject areas are beginning to show in improved rates of learning and progress. However, in some subject areas, for example in mathematics, although evidence in pupils' books shows that there is effective teaching in some classes, this is not consistently the case across the subject as a whole.
- In some lessons, teachers' expectations of middle ability pupils are too low. Pupils apply themselves well to the work and make progress, but books show that they achieve less than that of which they are capable over time.
- Teachers show that they are committed to helping pupils learn. The relationships between teachers and pupils are very positive – which supports the positive behaviours seen in most classes, most of the time. Teachers model respect, and value pupils' views. This reinforces the academy's values and complements its work in helping pupils show respect for each other.
- Teachers are adept at using questions to check for misunderstanding and use pupils' responses as learning points to correct mistakes. However, high-quality questioning which leads to deeper thinking is used less frequently and less consistently by all teachers.
- Work over time to improve learning has been fruitful in a number of subjects. Teaching in English, design technology, health and social care, and BTEC science is consistently effective. Here, pupils achieve better than in other subjects. This is because teachers are clear about their expectations, plan high levels of achievement and provide specific advice on what to do to move up to the next grade level. This effective practice is not consistent in some classes in other subjects.
- Teaching in the sixth form reflects recent improvements which are seen in the improved rates of progress in both vocational courses and, increasingly, in academic courses.
- Pupils' work shows that the academy's policy on written feedback, while clear, is not used consistently by all teachers in the academy. In some cases, feedback does not lead to pupils improving their work. Where the

policy is used rigorously, teachers' comments lead to clear improvement and faster progress.

- Overall, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs learn effectively because knowledge of their needs is used to plan learning which sets work at the right level. Current checking of pupils' progress shows that these pupils are making similar progress to others in most subjects. Their progress in English is slower than in other subjects. Pupils respond well to teachers' expectations.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The academy's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The academy's planning for pupils' personal development is well-thought-through. As a result, pupils grow in self-awareness and self-confidence over their time in school. They speak confidently, are happy to offer their views and to listen to others.
- Inspectors' discussions with pupils showed that they know about, and understand, the damaging effects of bullying, whether it is physical or emotional, and how misuse of the internet can put them at risk. Pupils are confident that bullying is rare and that incidents are dealt with well by staff. Checks on academy records confirm that incidents are logged carefully, noting the actions taken. When appropriate, additional assemblies are used to remind pupils of the academy's expectations.
- Pupils learn about different religions and cultures in religious studies lessons and the personal, social, health and economic education lessons, called 'C4'. They appreciate differences in others' beliefs, cultures and lifestyles. Discussion with pupils of all ages shows that they respect and are tolerant of others. This helps them prepare well for life in modern Britain and appreciate fundamental British values.
- Pupils learn about the particular dangers of drug misuse, child sexual exploitation and have an awareness of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. Pupils have shown considerable empathy for victims of recent terrorist attacks in France.
- In addition to learning about risks, pupils learn how to lead healthy lives in terms of diet and relationships with others. For example, pupils in a Year 10 class appreciated learning about safe sex and how to avoid sexually transmitted infections.
- Pupils' wider understanding of the risks they may face helps them keep safe.
- Pupils are confident that they are well cared for and supported when they have problems. Pastoral leaders make sure that all the agencies required to support pupils and their families are properly involved in providing a network of support. This includes social and mental health services.
- In carefully identified cases, pastoral and senior leaders arrange to place a small number of pupils at a school offering alternative provision for all or part of the week. This helps these pupils re-establish effective learning routines and provides specialised support to address personal issues where appropriate.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils listen to their teachers and follow instructions. However, some pupils lose interest in their learning at times when they are not being closely monitored by teachers. On these occasions, they do not show the resilience needed to maintain the positive attitudes which help them to make progress as well as they should.
- When lessons are not challenging enough, interest wanes and some incidents of low-level disruption were seen as a consequence.
- In most lessons, pupils apply themselves well and are polite and respectful of others. This positive approach to learning does not, however, always translate into pride in their work. Presentation, in some books, is not of a consistently high quality.
- Leaders have put in place effective systems to ensure that pupils attend regularly. Pupils' attendance is in line with the national average and there are few differences between groups of pupils. Persistent absence is very low compared to national figures and there have been no permanent exclusions for several years.
- In social time, and when moving around the academy, pupils behave well. They show respect for their environment, for each other and for adults alike. The site is clean, litter free and there is a calm and orderly atmosphere throughout the day. As a consequence, pupils say they feel safe when they are in school.
- In discussions, pupils told inspectors that behaviour around the academy has improved and they feel it is now good. Inspectors found that pupils are well-supervised by staff and that, almost always, pupils regulate

their own behaviours well. Frequent school surveys of parents' views show that the vast majority of parents have positive views about behaviour. A small number of parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, however, do not agree.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Pupils' achievement across different subjects is consistently not good enough. In summer 2015, the improvements seen in subjects like English, design technology and some science courses contrast with the variability in other subjects such as mathematics. The previous improvements in mathematics were not sustained.
- The gap in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, compared to others, broadly matches national figures. However, the gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others remained wide in summer 2015.
- Progress made by disadvantaged pupils in 2015 improved markedly in English compared to previous years, but this was not mirrored in other subjects to the same degree and was very low in 2015. Leaders' analysis shows that the previous improvement in mathematics has not been sustained. The academy's entry policy for higher tier examination meant that too many pupils achieved a grade D rather than a grade C. Senior leaders and leaders in mathematics have already addressed this issue for current pupils.
- The progress being made by disadvantaged pupils in current years, including in Key Stage 3, is improving. In most subject areas, progress is on target to match expectations. However, the gap between their achievement and that of others, whilst closing, remains a priority for leaders.
- Currently, the sharper checks introduced by leaders are making a positive difference to how well pupils across Key Stages 3 and 4 are progressing. Higher expectations of progress are raising the bar and more good teaching is leading to better learning. As a result, across all key stages, including the sixth form, there is a clear improvement in the proportions of pupils overall, and from different groups, who are on track to make at least expected progress. The wide variation between subjects is decreasing quickly. Consequently, current assessment information shows that almost all subjects are on track to match national averages for progress, including for pupils studying in the current Year 11.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making the same level of improved progress as other groups of pupils from their starting points, because leaders and teachers use their knowledge of these pupils' needs to tailor learning that promotes better progress. However, progress in English lags behind for this group of pupils. Leaders are aware of this gap and are working to improve basic language skills further through a range of interventions, including the use of systematic phonics, to help pupils recognise the sounds that letters make and help them to read better.
- Pupils taught wholly, or for part of the week, at the alternative provision, once settled, begin to make good progress against their targets.
- Most-able pupils are making improved progress towards their targets across most academic subjects.
- Assessment information is checked by senior leaders with increasing rigour. This provides them with detailed information so that appropriate support and interventions are put in place where underachievement is identified. This more robust approach is beginning to impact positively on progress overall.
- Achievement in the sixth form, in summer 2015, reflected the variation in achievement in Key Stage 4. Pupils following courses leading to vocational qualifications achieved well whilst those following academic courses did not make the expected levels of progress, given their starting points. However, recent changes in tracking and intervention are showing that progress rates in academic subjects are now accelerating.

16 to 19 study programmes

require improvement

- Leaders have not ensured that the advice and guidance given to learners in the past and the quality of teaching were good enough to secure consistently good achievement for learners. As a consequence, in summer 2015, learners achieved well in vocational subjects, overall, but did not achieve as well as they should in most academic subjects at AS and A level.
- Recent changes to strengthen checks on learners' progress are now leading to improving rates of progress for learners in Years 12 and 13.

- Teaching in vocational subjects is strong and is improving in academic subjects. This is because systems to check on teaching quality and checks on learners' progress are sharper and lead to earlier support.
- Senior leaders and those with responsibility for sixth form provision ensure that the same high standards of care and support for learners, identified in the main school, are maintained for their learners. Learners confirm that they feel well-cared-for and that help and advice are readily available.
- The careers information and advice programme that starts in the main school is developed further to ensure that learners receive independent information and advice that supports them in making suitable choices for the future. As a consequence, an increasing number of learners, from communities with little history of access to higher education, are successfully applying for places to study at university. A small number of learners are being offered places to study at top universities in the country. Equally, the proportion of learners leaving the academy, both at the end of Key Stage 4 and sixth form who are not in education or training, is very low.
- The large majority of learners beginning courses at A level and Level 3 BTEC and Diploma courses in Year 12 complete their study at the end of Year 13.
- The academy is increasingly effective in ensuring that learners who enter the sixth form with grades lower than C in English or mathematics at GCSE successfully attain this, or higher grades, during their time in the sixth form.
- Learners have opportunities for work placement or other work-related activities which help them prepare for the future. This complements their development in understanding risks to their safety. Learners are confident that they can recognise risk and how to deal with it.
- Learners in the sixth form make a significant contribution to the academy, in particular by accepting and demonstrating that they are role models for younger pupils. Behaviour reflects learners' growing maturity and is good. Their growing self-confidence and ambition for their futures are communicated by their example to younger pupils. Governors and parents report that this is having a positive impact on the wider community around the school.

School details

Unique reference number	135942
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10002157

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	718
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	78
Appropriate authority	Schools Partnership Trust Academies
Chair	Chris Mills
Principal	Gill Pollard
Telephone number	01709 864001
Website	www.dewarenne.org.uk
Email address	admin@dewarenne.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	5–6 December 2013

Information about this school

- De Warenne Academy is smaller than the average secondary school. It is sponsored by the Schools Partnership Trust Academies (the Trust).
- For part or for the whole of the week, a small number of pupils attend the Trust's off-site alternative provision at St Wilfrid's Academy, Doncaster.
- The academy collaborates with other schools from across the Trust to provide a range of academic and vocational courses in the sixth form.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported with additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, is well-above the national average. This funding is provided for those known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well above average.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 39 lessons, observing teaching and learning and pupils' behaviour.
- A wide sample of pupils' work, in books and files, was scrutinised across all key stages.
- Inspectors talked with groups of pupils from each key stage to gather their views about their learning and day-to-day experiences in school. Inspectors talked with members of staff and considered their views from the staff questionnaire.
- Meetings were held with the Principal, and a range of other senior leaders, to discuss the academy's performance. Inspectors discussed with middle leaders their part in leading provision for pupils.
- Inspectors held discussions with governors and the Chief Executive of the Trust that sponsors the academy.
- Information about how well pupils placed at the alternative provisions are progressing was gathered and evaluated alongside a wide range of other documentary evidence. For example, inspectors examined the academy's self-evaluation and plans for improvement and studied the assessment information about pupils' progress in detail.
- Inspectors took into account the views of the 23 parents who completed the online Parent View survey. They considered, too, the views of the much larger number of parents who have responded, at various points during the course of the year, to questionnaires from the academy.

Inspection team

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