

Westbourne Academy

Marlow Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 5JN

Inspection dates

8–9 November 2016

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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils do not make enough good progress from their various starting points. In 2016, pupils' progress was significantly below the national average.
- Despite improvements in attainment in 2016, pupils did not make enough progress in a number of subjects, including English and science.
- Disadvantaged pupils, the most able, and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not achieve well across a range of subjects.
- Leaders' use of the additional funding that they receive for disadvantaged pupils has not yet secured rapid enough improvement in the outcomes for this group of pupils.
- Although improving, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not yet consistently good across the curriculum.
- Teachers' expectations of the most able pupils are not high enough across the curriculum. Teachers' planned work does not consistently take account of what the pupils already know and understand.
- Leaders' monitoring of the provision for pupils who attend different forms of alternative provision is not yet systematic enough or well embedded.
- Leaders' administrative systems for reporting pupils' absence from education are not always in line with the most up-to-date local authority guidance and processes.

The school has the following strengths

- The principal's work, since his appointment in 2014, to change the culture of the school is starting to make a positive difference to the provision for pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Most pupils value their education, behave appropriately, and are keen to learn.
- Senior leaders' work to recruit and train middle leaders, since the previous inspection, has been effective. The pastoral and subject leaders have the capacity now to drive further improvement.
- The school's work with the increasing number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is ensuring that these pupils achieve well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the quality of leadership and management of pupils' development and welfare by:
 - sharpening the systems and protocols around the monitoring of pupils in alternative provision
 - ensuring that staff roles and responsibilities for monitoring alternative provision are clear
 - seeking clarification from the local authority about pupils missing education and off-roll processes, and reviewing school systems accordingly
 - sharpening the analysis of the use of the additional funding that the school receives to support the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, including the most able.
- Improve the quality of teaching so it is consistently good by:
 - eradicating weaker practice to ensure that teaching is consistently good across subjects
 - ensuring that teachers' planning takes account of what pupils already know and can do, so that pupils make rapid progress from their starting points
 - planning learning that meets the needs of a range of learners, particularly disadvantaged pupils and the most able, so that they make good progress.
- Improve achievement by:
 - ensuring that pupils make rapid progress from their various starting points across year groups; most notably disadvantaged pupils, the most able, and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - ensuring that attainment in science and English continues to rise, in the same way that it has in mathematics
 - making sure that the new leadership of special educational needs continues to embed improvements beyond Year 11, so that pupils across year groups and in all subjects make the progress of which they are capable.
- An external review of the use of the pupil premium is recommended so that the trust improves this aspect of its work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- While leaders, governors and the trust have an understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, they are overgenerous in their evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching and learning, and pupils' achievement.
- The trust supports school improvement by reviewing the provision on a regular basis. However, leaders do not always act swiftly on some of the areas for improvement identified by the trust around personal development and welfare.
- Leaders' monitoring of pupils in alternative provision is not consistently systematic. While senior and pastoral leaders undertake routine checks on pupils in various forms of alternative provision, the staff involved are not clear about the responsibilities of different personnel. Consequently, some of the administration around the monitoring is not sharp enough.
- Leaders do not have a thorough understanding of the local authority protocols and administrative processes around pupils missing education. Consequently, although leaders do ensure that staff refer vulnerable pupils appropriately, they are also referring pupils who do not meet the criteria.
- Leaders are not yet securing rapid enough progress for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders use a proportion of the additional funding that they receive for catch-up lessons and small-group support. While this use of the funding has made some difference to the achievement of these pupils, they are not yet achieving well enough.
- Most parents and pupils feel that the school has improved. They especially value the work of the principal in the last two years to increase the level of expectation and raise standards. However, a minority of parents and pupils still raise concerns about some teaching and a lack of progress in certain subjects.
- The principal has led the school diligently and has driven improvements in the ethos and culture of the school. Under his leadership, an increasing number of pupils are beginning to attain higher standards and are successful in securing post-16 courses. The principal has also developed middle leadership, and this group of leaders provides solid foundations for the school to build on current standards.
- The newly appointed leader for special educational needs is beginning to improve the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. She has recently implemented targeted support for Year 11 pupils who need to catch up. She has also overseen the work in the new 'Oasis' provision, where some vulnerable pupils are being helped to access their lessons more effectively. However, much of this work is in its early stages and it is too soon to judge how well pupils across all year groups benefit from the provision.
- Leaders' use of the performance management system is now far more rigorous. Leaders link teachers' individual targets into whole-school improvement plans, and senior leaders moderate all targets to ensure consistency. There is a clear balance between challenge and support. Following robust and regular evaluations, leaders carefully tailor training, linked to the teachers' standards, to meet the needs of each teacher. The quality of teaching, learning and achievement is beginning to improve

because leaders hold staff to account against the demanding targets. Teachers only progress up the pay scale based on their performance.

- The principal has sought to improve the various curriculum issues identified at the previous inspection. Pupils now access pathways that are far more suitable to their aspirations and abilities. Lower-attaining pupils, and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are now beginning to access a curriculum to allow them to achieve higher standards in the future.
- Pupils develop a clear understanding of British values at Westbourne Academy. Pupils access a range of information about diversity, equality, democracy and much more through assemblies, enrichment lessons, and in their vertical tutor groups. Pupils understand what it is to be a good citizen, and treat one another with courtesy and respect.

Governance of the school

- Specific members of the governing body regularly meet the designated safeguarding leader to review the school's safeguarding processes and training. However, governors are not sharp enough in how they monitor the provision for a few pupils who access alternative provision.
- Governors know the school well. They visit regularly, take part in the subject reviews and have a weekly written briefing that keeps them up to date with current school information. They are now able to use this evidence to ask pertinent questions of leaders. While their evaluation of the school's overall effectiveness is too generous, they are accurate in their understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision.
- The local governing body and trust work together effectively. Governors have a range of expertise and skills, and actively seek training from the school, trust and local authority to enhance their understanding of the most up-to-date guidance. They use this knowledge to communicate, support and challenge leaders over the quality of the provision, especially through the progress board.
- Governors ensure that the school now uses the pupil premium funding more effectively than previously. However, they acknowledge that the progress of disadvantaged pupils is not yet good enough.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The checks that the school undertakes when it employs new staff meet statutory requirements.
- The training that leaders provide ensures that, with the exception of referrals for pupils missing education, staff make appropriate referrals, including those for pupils who are vulnerable to extremism. Leaders act on this information in a timely way, and work well with an array of agencies to find the best support for pupils, when they need it. Staff leading this area are clear on the potential risks that their pupils face in the wider community and work with appropriate agencies to support those pupils who are vulnerable.
- Pupils say they feel safe. The electronic display screens in school effectively highlight

safeguarding concerns, including how pupils can keep themselves safe. Leaders have improved the curriculum, and the new enrichment activities build pupils' awareness about potential dangers. Pupils say they now feel confident about personal safety, particularly keeping themselves safe online, and have faith in the school staff to support them should problems arise.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection. However, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not yet securing good progress consistently for pupils across year groups and across the curriculum.
- Leaders' understanding of where strengths lie in teaching, learning and assessment is accurate. However, they are overgenerous in their view about the impact of teaching overall on pupils' learning across the curriculum.
- Teachers' planning does not yet take enough account of what pupils already know and can do. Frequently, teachers give pupils the same work, which is either too easy or too hard for some of them. As a result, some pupils make less progress than they otherwise could. While teachers' support for lower-ability pupils in lessons is increasingly more effective, the strategies being used are not doing enough to stretch the most able, and the most able disadvantaged pupils. Too often, these pupils have to wait until their classmates catch up, rather than being given work that increases their mastery of subjects.
- Pupils have some opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across different subjects. However, leaders have not fully embedded these opportunities across the curriculum, and weaker practice still exists in some areas. For example, in a Year 9 Spanish lesson, pupils were not being supported well enough to develop their skills in extended written work.
- Where teaching, learning and assessment are most effective, teachers use prior assessment well to support pupils to make good progress over time. In a Year 11 English lesson, for example, the teachers' specific and careful planning meant that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities had made rapid progress from their starting points. Consequently, these pupils were confident to talk about what they had learned. Similarly, in a Year 10 mathematics lesson, the teacher's prior knowledge of what the pupils could do challenged them to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills in using Pythagoras' theorem to solve three-dimensional problems.
- Where learning is best, teachers have high expectations and use questioning effectively to probe pupils' understanding; teachers check pupils' knowledge regularly and adapt activities accordingly. Consequently, these pupils make rapid progress over time. Inspectors saw clear evidence of improved practice among a growing number of teachers and departments.
- The school provides effective teaching and support programmes for the significant number of pupils who join the school speaking English as an additional language. The induction programme helps the pupils to integrate more effectively and access mainstream lessons successfully. In classes, teaching assistants use their specialist

training to support pupils well to develop their skills. Staff receive good-quality, regular updates and can access training that provides explicit strategies to support this group. As a result, pupils who speak English as an additional language make rapid progress, enabling them to catch up with their peers.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Leaders have not ensured that staff are consistently clear about the different responsibilities of those involved in leading and managing pupils' personal development and welfare. There is sometimes confusion between staff about the processes, which leads to delays in essential administration.
- Leaders are not clear on the local authority's protocols around pupils missing education. In an effort to be meticulous, leaders have referred all pupils who have left the school, whether they are missing or not. Consequently, they refer too many pupils to the local authority who do not need the referral. On occasion, leaders do not ensure that this paperwork reaches the correct department of the local authority as promptly as it should.
- While leaders support pupils in various forms of alternative provision well, they are not sufficiently robust in how they record some of the information. As a result, they are not as effective as they could be in measuring their own impact or the difference the provision has on pupils' overall achievement.
- Pupils become good citizens in modern Britain because the school supports this aspect of their development well. Pupils speak highly of the vertical tutoring system, and how it gives them opportunities to build a community atmosphere. The 'World at Westbourne' display promotes diversity by celebrating the birthplaces of the pupils in the school. Most pupils confirmed that they feel the school is a place where differences are celebrated. Inspectors certainly saw pupils treating each other with courtesy and respect.
- Leaders have invested heavily in a pastoral system that supports the personal development and welfare needs of pupils well. Form tutors use paired reading effectively to enhance pupils' social and moral development. Pupils receive points to reward positive behaviour and these points are sometimes used to make tutor-group donations to charity. Staff know pupils well and use their knowledge to help them when they need support with learning.
- Leaders ensure that pupils receive impartial careers advice. The new full-time careers adviser is establishing positive links with local post-16 providers. All pupils compile a careers portfolio and have an annual progression interview meeting with a senior leader. A far higher proportion of pupils, significantly above the national average, now move on to employment or higher education.
- Pupils say that incidents of bullying are rare. On the few occasions when they do arise, staff deal with issues effectively. The school's 'beat bullying' display gives the issue

high prominence, and current pupils' quotes and photos add local context effectively.

- Pupils say they feel safe and well cared for. Leaders have given the 'need to listen?' campaign a high profile. Consequently, pupils know where to go to for support and are confident that the school staff will work with them to resolve any issues that occur.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The principal's clear vision and insistence on high standards have driven significant improvements so that the behaviour of pupils is now good. The 'Westbourne Way' has been the blueprint for the calm and purposeful atmosphere that now permeates the school. Pupils queue patiently and behave well at breaktime and lunchtime, while listening to the school's own radio station. Pupils, staff and parents acknowledged the positive changes that have taken place since the previous inspection.
- Pupils move around the site in a calm and orderly way. Pupils use the one-way system to navigate some of the busier corridors safely.
- Pupils are polite, respectful and helpful to adults and each other.
- Leaders held an assembly linked to Remembrance Sunday, but added a past pupil's own story to make it even more poignant. Pupils' entry into an assembly was impeccable and their thoughtful and considered reflections on leaving indicated the power of the messages conveyed.
- Most pupils behave appropriately in lessons. They arrive on time, bring the correct equipment and are ready to learn. Although pupils say there is occasionally some disruption, this is rare, and dealt with well by most staff.
- Pupils are now proud to be part of the school. They say that behaviour has improved considerably over time. Pupils revel in the competition and community spirit that the new vertical tutoring groups has created. It is changing the culture among pupils about the importance of achievement. As one house leader said, 'they are no longer embarrassed to do well'.
- Pupils' attendance in 2015 was well below the national average. Leaders acted swiftly to improve this, especially through the work of the attendance officer and the pastoral teams. Form tutors use 'attendance matters triangles' to build a sense of corporate responsibility and pupils are responding positively. Attendance is now improving rapidly, including for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Outcomes for pupils

Require improvement

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress by the end of key stage 4, most notably in English and science. Despite improvements in some subjects, such as mathematics, Year 11 pupils in 2016 made significantly less progress in a range of subjects than other pupils did nationally.
- The progress of all disadvantaged pupils, including those who are most able, is not consistently good. Leaders' actions have improved outcomes markedly since 2015, but disadvantaged pupils' progress is not sufficiently rapid to enable them to catch up with other pupils nationally. Leaders' evaluation of the progress made by disadvantaged

pupils is overly generous and, on occasion, inaccurate.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not make good progress. An inappropriate curriculum and lack of effective support have resulted in many pupils not making securely good progress at key stages 3 and 4. While the new arrangements for curriculum and leadership are supporting current Year 11 pupils to achieve more, the impact of this work is still in its infancy, especially for those in other year groups.
- The most able pupils' achievement is not consistently good. Although in 2016 there were more pupils attaining higher grades in mathematics and English language, this is not a consistent picture across subjects and year groups. Current school assessment information indicates that the most able pupils in Years 8, 9 and 10 still lag behind.
- While pupils' progress is not yet consistently good enough, achievements in some subjects have improved since the previous inspection. Achievement in mathematics and modern foreign languages has risen. The numbers of pupils achieving a good pass in English and mathematics in 2016 were also higher than in previous years. English teaching has improved, but this is not yet having the required effect on pupils' outcomes by the end of Year 11.
- Leaders' work with pupils who are new to speaking English is effective. The leader responsible for this work has introduced some highly specific integration practice and targeted support. The three specialist teaching assistants provide good one-to-one assistance in lessons. In 2016, despite their lower starting points, the pupils made rapid gains in their achievement and achieved broadly in line with their peers. The school's success has been widely recognised and they now help other providers to develop their support.
- Leaders use the additional catch-up funding effectively. Pupils receive additional English lessons, use a range of literacy and numeracy programmes, and can attend a summer school to help them catch up. Consequently, leaders are making real improvements to how well pupils read, especially lower-attaining pupils, and in how quickly they improve their skills and how much they enjoy reading.

School details

Unique reference number	139288
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10021243

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	961
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Ron Impey
Principal	Garry Trott
Telephone number	01473 742 315
Website	www.westbourne.attrust.org.uk
Email address	office@westbourne.attrust.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–11 December 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education (DfE) guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is slightly larger than the average secondary school.
- Westbourne Academy converted to become an academy on 1 February 2013 and became part of the Academy Transformation Trust in April 2013.
- A small number of pupils access education off-site through the Suffolk Online programme or at the pupil referral units at Kingsfield, Hampden House and Parkside.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average.

- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. There are an increasing number of pupils who join the school, often part-way through the year, who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium, at around one third of the cohort, is above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- The principal has been in post since September 2014.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors carried out observations, many of which were joint observations with senior leaders, across all year groups and in a wide range of subjects. They also looked carefully at pupils' work, and talked to pupils from different year groups to discuss their experience of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the principal, senior and middle leaders, newly qualified teachers and representatives from the trust.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work to assess pupils' progress over time.
- The lead inspector met with the chair, the vice-chair of the local governing body and the governor responsible for safeguarding pupils.
- Inspectors held telephone conversations with parents, representatives from the local authority, and with leaders from the pupil referral units at Kingsfield, Hampden House and Parkside.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documentation including the records for safeguarding pupils, case studies, attendance records, self-evaluation summaries, the school improvement plan and current assessment information.
- Inspectors took account of the views of 32 pupils, 38 parents and 60 members of staff from the online questionnaire, and considered the 45 responses on Parent View.

Inspection team

John Randall, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kim Pigram	Her Majesty's Inspector
Simon Bell	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Whear	Ofsted Inspector

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