

Wellington School

Wellington Road, Timperley, Altrincham, Cheshire WA15 7RH

Inspection dates

2–3 March 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

- The school is well led and managed. Parents, pupils and staff are overwhelmingly positive about the impact of school leaders and the headteacher.
- School leaders, including governors, have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They have the capacity to continue improving opportunities for pupils.
- Most current pupils achieve well across a broad range of subjects. The outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, especially those in Year 11, continue to improve. This is especially the case in mathematics.
- Senior leaders monitor the spending of additional funds to support disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities effectively. However, even closer monitoring of the impact of actions for some groups of disadvantaged pupils would support even stronger outcomes.
- Teaching is good and improving across most subjects. Teachers have strong subject knowledge but do not consistently challenge the most able pupils.
- Most pupils have good attitudes to learning and they almost always demonstrate positive conduct around the school. In a small minority of lessons, the behaviour of a few pupils is not conducive to good learning.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and pupils make good progress overall. However, some pupils would benefit from a wider range of courses in key stage 4.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural learning are plentiful. Extra-curricular activities are varied and popular.
- Leadership of the sixth form has been reviewed and it is now led and managed effectively. Most teaching in the sixth form is at least good. Students make good progress overall.
- Careers guidance is a strength of the school. Consequently, almost all pupils follow appropriate education or training courses when they leave. All of those leaving Year 13 in 2016, including disadvantaged students, accepted university or apprenticeship offers.
- School leaders ensure that arrangements to keep pupils safe are thorough and effective. Most pupils attend school regularly.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching to ensure that pupils make even more progress by:
 - monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of leaders' strategies to improve the progress made by disadvantaged pupils
 - ensuring that teachers plan lessons that challenge pupils and students to reach their full potential
 - improving the range of subjects offered in key stage 4.
- Ensure that the disruption caused by a very small number of pupils is eradicated.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leadership and management are good and the school has continued to improve since the last inspection.
- Pupils, parents and staff are positive about how the school is led and managed. They recognise and value the role that the headteacher plays in improving the school. Pupils, parents and staff understand and believe in his vision. They would recommend the school to others.
- School leaders promote high standards and expectations right across the school. They have driven important improvements since the previous inspection, for example they have raised standards in mathematics and improved the leadership of the sixth form. Leaders demonstrate a strong determination to achieve even better outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- School leaders, including governors and middle leaders, have an accurate, clear and consistent understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas it needs to prioritise for improvement.
- Staff, including teachers who are recently qualified, are positive about their training and the effect that it has had on improving the quality of teaching. For example, in mathematics, outcomes are now good because of better teaching in this subject. Pupils and parents are positive about the standard of teaching and most pupils think that they are taught well.
- Performance management and pay progression are effectively led. They are clearly linked to targets set by leaders. Targets support the school's improvement plan and include developments in leadership, teaching and the progress of pupils. Consequently, performance management has been effective in improving teaching and outcomes for pupils.
- Pupils' attendance is good and most are punctual to lessons. School leaders are vigilant and support pupils who are at risk of poor attendance. Leaders are also effective in ensuring the positive behaviour of most pupils. Attitudes to learning are usually strong in lessons. However, in a minority of lessons there is occasional low-level disruption and this disturbs the learning of other pupils.
- Overall outcomes for pupils at the end of Year 11 have been good in recent years. Information shared by school leaders and work seen in pupils' books demonstrate that results are on course to remain positive.
- School leaders use pupil premium funding effectively. This had led to the improved outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged. Leaders' own information shows convincingly that the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in the present Year 11 are set to improve further. More of these pupils will be better positioned to follow high-level qualifications in the sixth form and beyond. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in other year groups continue to improve. However, leaders do not yet evaluate and review the effectiveness of their actions to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. They do not check what works well and what needs to change.

- School leaders do, however, plan and evaluate the effectiveness of the Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up programme with rigour. For example, there are additional small-group and one-to-one sessions to improve reading. As a result of these and other actions, almost all pupils who receive this additional support reach the expected standard by the end of Year 7.
- Additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used effectively. Staff are well informed and trained in teaching and supporting pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Consequently, these pupils achieve well. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have a curriculum designed to meet their specific needs. As a result, every pupil who has special educational needs and/or disabilities is successful in moving to appropriate next stages in education, employment and training. School leaders are required to review regularly their documentation on special educational needs provision. Leaders should ensure that they now maintain vigilance in keeping this up to date.
- Most pupils follow a curriculum which is appropriate for their needs and, as such, the curriculum is broad and balanced. The curriculum supports good outcomes for most pupils because it is well planned and taught. Pupils are well prepared to progress to appropriate next steps in their education, employment or training. All pupils follow a languages qualification at key stage 4, which supports the vision of school leaders to provide an ambitious and academic curriculum for all pupils. A small minority of pupils would achieve even more with an improved range of subjects at key stage 4.
- School leaders place great value on the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided. Pupils also recognise this aspect of the curriculum as a strength of the school. Activities are many and varied. They include sporting, artistic, musical and academic clubs and activities. In a recent survey, leaders found that a good proportion of pupils regularly attend extra-curricular activities. Every pupil in Year 7 attends at least one after-school club each week. This strength of the school has been recognised through an award for strong participation in extra-curricular and after-school activities.
- School leaders are reflective and outward-facing. Consequently, the school has made more rapid progress in areas for improvement than might otherwise have been the case. For example, in response to an external review of their support for disadvantaged pupils, school leaders set up a pre-school homework session. This has resulted in a significant improvement in the quality and regularity of homework from disadvantaged pupils in Year 7 and Year 9.
- There is strong provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils develop a good understanding of British values, including the importance of equal rights, democracy and the rule of law. They learn about different religions and cultures and about diversity in Britain. Their respect for peers and others with different sexualities is a strong feature.
- The large majority of parents say that they receive regular, useful information about the progress that their child is making and that their children achieve well. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the way the school is led and would recommend the school to others.

Governance of the school

- Governance is a strength of the school. Governors have a clear understanding of their roles. They have taken positive steps to ensure that the governing body has expertise across the range of areas required.
- Governors take responsibility for their training and because of this they are well informed and up to date with key issues, for example safeguarding and pupil progress measures. This enables them to challenge and support the headteacher and other leaders effectively.
- Governors recognise, understand and support the school's improvement priorities, such as the importance of continuing to raise standards in the sixth form and further improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils feel and are safe.
- Pupils, staff and governors are trained to identify safeguarding risks and are vigilant in their responsibilities to keep themselves and others safe. Governors are trained in safer recruitment. There is a strong and effective culture of safeguarding across the school.
- School leaders work closely and effectively with other agencies and parents to keep children safe. Concerns over pupils' welfare are pursued swiftly and documented thoroughly.
- Parents who responded to Parent View said that their children were safe and well looked after by the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Most pupils make good, and sometimes better, progress across a broad range of subjects in key stage 3 and in key stage 4. In mathematics, where teaching was previously considered less effective by school leaders, teaching is now good. Mathematics is effectively led and managed.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and this supports pupils' learning. For example, across the school, pupils are regularly asked relevant and challenging questions. This promotes good progress.
- Teachers are effective in checking the progress that their pupils make and they accurately identify what pupils need to do next to improve. The in-school training programme has led to the consistent use of questioning by teachers in lessons to promote good learning and progress for pupils.
- Most teachers set work that helps pupils to make good progress. In some lessons, however, expectations are not demanding enough. Because of this, some pupils, including the most able, do not make the progress that they should in these lessons.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are effectively supported by school leaders and professionals. Pupils follow a personalised and broad curriculum which is well taught. The progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or

disabilities and is regularly monitored and further support for learning is put in place as required. Because of effective teaching, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.

- Relationships between pupils, teachers and other adults are usually strong. This supports the good progress that pupils make. In a minority of lessons the attitudes to learning of some pupils are not good enough and this disturbs the learning of other pupils.
- Teachers set regular and appropriate homework across a broad range of subjects and this contributes well to pupils' learning. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to Parent View were positive about the homework set.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils demonstrate very high standards of respect for others' ideas and views. The school is an inclusive and outward-looking community. Diversity is celebrated in school. There is a 'pride club' which celebrates and supports pupils and others with different sexualities. The club has been set up at the request of pupils and the school has been recognised by the presentation of a national diversity award.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of how to keep themselves safe because of the high priority school leaders place on this. Pupils understand how to stay safe online, how to remain safe from extremism, and the risks of mobile technology. Pupils learn about their own health and well-being, including sex and relationships education. Bullying is rare and pupils are confident that any instances of it are dealt with quickly and effectively.
- The school's work to promote pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is a strength of the school. This strength, alongside the teaching of British values, plays a prominent role in the curriculum. There are many presentations and posters in classrooms and around the school site that promote these values. Pupils are active fundraisers, supporting local and national causes, most recently raising more than £40,000 for a national charity. School leaders say that the strong impact of these aspects of the curriculum 'enables pupils to thrive'.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are confident and polite. They take pride in their appearance. Behaviour around the school and during breaks is good. Pupils are punctual to lessons. Relationships between pupils, teachers and other adults are usually very positive. Parents, pupils and staff are overwhelmingly positive about the behaviour of pupils at the school.
- Attitudes to learning are usually good, and this supports good learning. Pupils take pride in their work and this is reflected by high standards of presentation. A few pupils have difficulties in sustaining good behaviour in some lessons, but staff generally manage occasional off-task behaviour effectively.

- Attendance is above average. Absence has slightly risen this year, but overall it remains lower than the national average. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils has improved, including those who have previously been regularly absent from school. The attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities remains in line with national averages overall.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes for pupils are good. This year, outcomes for almost all pupils across a range of subjects and all year groups are set to improve. Pupils' work over time supports this view.
- Outcomes in mathematics for current pupils, including for those who are disadvantaged and most able, continue to improve and are good. Year 11 pupils attained good scores in a recent mock GCSE examination which was marked externally. The proportion attaining good grades compared favourably with national outcomes.
- Outcomes of disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, also continue to improve. This is because leaders use pupil premium funding well to support disadvantaged pupils' progress across all year groups. However, with more systematic monitoring and evaluation of the strategies that leaders use to support disadvantaged pupils, outcomes could be strengthened further.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well overall. Additional support enables these pupils to study an appropriate, broad and balanced range of subjects and make good progress. These pupils achieve good outcomes and move on to appropriate education, employment or training once they leave the school.
- Although the most able pupils generally make good progress across a range of subjects, including English and mathematics, during their time in school, sometimes these pupils are not challenged sufficiently well. School leaders, including governors, recognise this as an area where greater consistency in learning is required.
- Leaders ensure that pupils receive comprehensive information, advice and guidance, including impartial careers advice, throughout their time at the school. This prepares pupils well for their next stages in education, employment and/or training. The number of pupils who move on to education, training or employment is well above the national average. Careers guidance is a strength of the school and its impact was recognised by a national 'gold' award in 2016.
- Pupils make good progress overall but some would benefit from an improved range of subjects in their curriculum at key stage 4.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- The sixth form offers an academic curriculum, with students following a range of A-level courses. There are no vocational courses offered.
- Leadership of the sixth form has been reviewed by the school and a new structure has been in place since September 2016. This has led to higher expectations and progress.
- Leadership is now good and leaders have accurately identified and prioritised the areas of the sixth form that needed most improvement. The systems that they have

introduced are starting to have a positive effect on provision. Consequently, teaching, learning and assessment are now good and more consistent across subjects. Students are making stronger progress than in recent years across a range of subjects.

- Outcomes for students are set to be good in the summer 2017 examinations. Progress across a broad range of subjects in recent mock examination grades demonstrates that students are making better progress than students in previous years and that outcomes are set to be at least in line with the national average.
- Leaders use assessment information forensically and accurately. They identify students and groups of students who make slow progress and help them catch up. Strategies to support students include a personalised improvement plan and tailored support programmes. Students welcome and value these strategies. Leaders say that this system has a positive effect on students' progress. This is demonstrated in the most recent mock examination results, where these students attained stronger results than in previous assessments.
- There has been an increase in the proportion of students attaining A* to C grades at A level since the last inspection. However, sixth-form leaders recognise that greater academic challenge for students across more lessons is required to further improve outcomes for students. Inspectors also saw that this was required. In some lessons and books there was insufficient challenge for some pupils.
- Students retaking English and/or mathematics GCSE are far more successful than others nationally. Although numbers are small, last year two thirds reached an A* to C grade.
- The study programmes followed by students are a strength of the sixth form. All students complete a week-long work experience placement in Year 12, related to their interests and/or career ambitions. This is supplemented by a programme of activities every Wednesday afternoon. The curriculum prepares students effectively their life beyond school and includes sessions on mindfulness, managing stress and life skills. Students support Year 7 pupils with reading and they speak positively about the ways in which members of the school community work together.
- Students are safe and feel that they are well supported in staying safe. Behaviour in lessons is good and attendance is high.
- Sixth-form leaders support students very well with careers and further education advice and guidance. All students who completed Year 13 in 2016 moved on to appropriate courses. An increasing proportion also progressed to Russell Group universities. Last year, 78% took up a university offer and 22% moved on to appropriate apprenticeships. In the same year, 100% of disadvantaged students took up a university offer.
- Students are very positive about the sixth form and because of this retention is high. At present, 99% of students who began Year 12 still attend and 100% of pupils who completed Year 12 are still in Year 13.

School details

Unique reference number	136377
Local authority	Trafford
Inspection number	10024403

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,398
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr P Tarry
Headteacher	Mr S Beeley
Telephone number	0161 928 4157
Website	www.wellington.trafford.sch.uk
Email address	sbeeley@wellington.trafford.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–26 June 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with the Department for Education's guidance on what academies should publish on their websites.
- This is a large school, with significantly more pupils than the national average. The school also includes 16 to 19 provision.
- Pupils enter the school with starting points significantly above the national average.
- Most pupils at the school are White British. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak a first language not/believed not to be English are broadly in line with national averages.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities supported by the school is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of

pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is well below the national average.

- A very small number of pupils attend alternative provision.
- The school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress by the end of Year 11, in 2016.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 48 lessons across a broad range of subjects. These included lessons observed jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also carried out a scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with pupils. They also spoke with pupils in lessons and at break and lunchtimes. Inspectors considered 123 responses to the pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors held discussions with staff, including senior and middle leaders, teachers and newly qualified teachers. A meeting was held with three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors took account of the 235 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the 59 questionnaires completed by staff.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of documentation provided by the school. This included information on pupils' achievement, attendance and behaviour, school policies, the school's self-evaluation of its work, school improvement plans and information about attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Stephen Ruddy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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