

# LWS Academy

Montefiore Drive, Sarisbury Green, Southampton, Hampshire SO31 7NL

## Inspection dates

23 May and 13 June 2017

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	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders' self-evaluation of the quality of education provided by the school is overgenerous. This impacts negatively on development and improvement planning.
- Those in positions of governance do not fully understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school, or hold leaders to account for the outcomes of pupils.
- Systems to track pupils' progress do not focus sharply enough on their academic achievement and outcomes.
- Too many pupils do not make good progress from their different starting points, especially in mathematics and English.
- The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent across the school and within subjects. Teachers' expectations of pupils are not high enough.
- Teachers do not always plan learning that fully meets the needs of pupils. This means that opportunities for pupils to make progress are restricted.
- Poor behaviour and disruption in classrooms is too common. This impacts negatively on pupils' engagement with learning.
- Pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should. A significant proportion of pupils are persistently absent.

### The school has the following strengths

- The staff are a dedicated team and work hard to meet the complex needs of pupils.
- The curriculum offer meets the needs of pupils well. This is especially the case in a wide range of college and other alternative provision used by the school.
- The school has recently become part of a multi-academy trust. This has created capacity for future rapid improvement.
- Safeguarding is effective. Systems and procedures to keep pupils safe are robust.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve systems to track pupils' progress, so that:
  - leaders have a clear understanding of the academic progress pupils are making, both in the range of subjects offered and from their different starting points
  - teachers are better able to plan learning that matches the needs of individual pupils more closely
  - those in positions of governance can hold leaders to account for the progress pupils make, especially in English and mathematics.
- Improve attendance so that pupils come to school regularly and the persistent absence of a significant minority of pupils is greatly reduced.
- Ensure that low-level disruption in classrooms and around the school is reduced, by increasing expectations of pupils' behaviour and improving the quality of teaching and learning.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Senior leaders do not have a clear enough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their self-evaluation is not as rigorous as it should be. They have an overgenerous impression of the quality of education the school is providing. As a consequence, improvement planning is not as effective as it could be and the quality of education received by pupils has declined since the predecessor school was inspected.
- Middle leaders do not have as much impact on improving the school as they might. While there are clear strengths in the pastoral care of pupils, subject leadership is not as fully developed as it needs to be.
- Systems to monitor pupils' progress are not fit for purpose. They do not allow leaders to identify clearly enough the pupils who are not making good or better progress in learning. Collaborative work to address this weakness, in partnership with a leader from within the multi-academy trust, has just started. A new system is nearly ready and projected to be in place for the start of the new school year.
- School leaders monitor the quality of teaching and learning, but this aspect of their work requires improvement. While they can identify where teaching is stronger, there is no clear evidence of the impact of their work to improve the quality of learning. As a consequence, there is too much variation in the quality of teaching. This is impacting negatively on the progress pupils make.
- Additional funding from the Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium helps to fund a programme that supports pupils' transition into the school. This includes the purchasing of resources and additional classroom provision which is based on a primary school model of learning.
- Pupil premium and additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities provide for bespoke packages and additional targeted support. The impact of the use of additional funding is reflected in the judgement that outcomes for pupils require improvement.
- The school's curriculum is a relative strength. Pupils benefit from accessing a broad range of subjects and bespoke pathways. This includes placements at a number of colleges or alternative provisions. College placements enable pupils to study for a wide range of qualifications, including BTEC National Diploma awards and other vocational studies. Pupils are also able to study for a range of GCSE subjects at the school.
- Pupils are able to access a range of clubs which are available to them throughout the school day. These include sports clubs or the information and communication technology club. One pupil explained very eloquently the benefits of the 'quiet' club, where he enjoys playing board games or drawing.
- Pupils learn about British values through the wider curriculum and during tutor sessions led by members of the leadership team. Discussions about tolerance and respect for others are supplemented by events such as cultural days focusing on local history or a recent visit to the Houses of Parliament for instance. Lessons that explore issues such as extremism and human rights ensure that pupils have a growing understanding of

the world around them.

- Leaders place great importance on ensuring that staff support pupils' social and emotional development. As a consequence, this aspect of the school's provision is stronger than others. Personal, social and health education also has a high profile. Leaders know that this is very important in preparing pupils, many with complex needs, for life after they leave the school.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governance of the school is in a period of transition. Plans to form a local governing committee are still at an early stage of development since the school joined the Gosport and Fareham Multi-Academy Trust in April 2017. Clear lines of delegated responsibility are in place to ensure that those in positions of local governance understand their collective duties to hold school leaders to account. This includes the monitoring of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- In the past, those in positions of governance have not been as fully aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses as they should. Their knowledge of the quality of the school's provision was not well informed. As a consequence, the governing body was not in a position to provide the support and challenge required to ensure that the school remained good.
- Governors understand their responsibilities with regard to their strategic overview of the school. They ensure that safeguarding and financial management are effective. Their decision to join the multi-academy trust has created capacity for leaders and governors to access the wider expertise and resources which are now available to help them improve the school.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The safeguarding of pupils and staff is given the highest priority by school leaders. Policies and procedures are fit for purpose. Staff training is up to date. This includes appropriate training for the school's four designated safeguarding leaders and further specialist training for those responsible for the recruitment of staff.
- Governors have a clear overview of safeguarding. Members of staff in enhanced positions of responsibility regarding safeguarding are experienced and carry out their duties diligently. They are not afraid to follow up concerns or to challenge other professionals when required. As a consequence, the school's culture to keep pupils safe is strong and all staff are fully aware of their responsibilities.
- Although the very few parents who spoke to inspectors or completed the online parent questionnaire expressed mixed views, pupils and staff are positive about their safety at school. One pupil said that the staff give pupils 'a lot of care' during their time at school. Another pupil acknowledged that pupils' behaviour is challenging at times, but that staff 'handle it well' so that pupils are safe.

**Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent across the school and within subjects. Visits to classrooms and scrutiny of pupils' work by inspectors showed a wide variation in the quality of provision. Some pupils make good progress during lessons and over time but for others, there is little evidence that this is the case.
- Teaching staff do not have a clear system in place to help them to assess pupils' progress and plan next steps in learning. As a consequence, there is too much focus on recording pupils' apparent engagement with learning, rather than the progress they are making.
- More than one English lesson visited by inspectors was characterised by high expectation and work that clearly addressed pupils' differing needs. However, evidence in some books showed limited opportunities for pupils to write and that progress over time for the same group was limited.
- Visits to mathematics lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work also showed limited progress for some pupils. Low expectations of what pupils can accomplish and a lack of clarity about age-appropriate tasks mean that opportunities for pupils to make accelerated progress are lost.
- Where teachers plan interesting and engaging learning, pupils concentrate and respond well. This was the case in design and technology, where pupils were designing and making audio boxes. This was also apparent in a physical education lesson where well-directed support in a boxing session led to rapid gains in pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are generally strong. Support staff are particularly skilled at encouraging pupils to engage with learning. Questioning skills and other strategies to encourage pupils to participate are employed well by teaching and support staff alike.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Requires improvement

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Too many pupils do not experience the levels of success in their learning that they should. This is equally the case for pupils attending the school now as it has been in recent cohorts.
- Staff work hard to ensure that the physical and emotional well-being of pupils is supported well. Many pupils have difficulty managing social interactions or regulating their emotions. The calm and measured approach employed by staff when dealing with emotional outbursts is increasingly successful and is contributing well to a reduction in incidents of this nature.
- The school offers a wide range of therapeutic support to pupils and their families. Developing social skills and preparing pupils for life beyond school are given a high priority. Pupils understand bullying and how to deal with it. They also know about the potential dangers they face when using the internet or social media, for instance.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Despite the efforts of staff, incidents of poor behaviour and lack of self-discipline from pupils were evident throughout the inspection. School records show a decline in exclusions, as well as fewer serious breaches in behaviour over time. However, this aspect of the school is still not good enough.
- The level of off-task behaviour that disrupts lessons is too high, even when the context of pupils' complex needs is taken into account. Pupils' attitudes to learning are not as well developed as they could be.
- Too many pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should. This is having a detrimental result on individual pupils' outcomes, as well as impacting negatively on teachers' ability to cater for the needs of the classes they teach.
- The persistent absence of a significant minority of pupils is also worrying. Leaders are working hard to address this situation, but are frustrated by the many barriers they face. Recent improvements in attendance figures indicate that their efforts are beginning to have an impact.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Too many pupils do not make the progress they are capable of because the quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent. This includes the most able pupils as well as those who come from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Other factors, including pupils' previous experiences in education, their disruptive behaviour, as well as poor attendance and high levels of emotional need all play a part in the current weaknesses in outcomes. The lack of a robust system to monitor the progress pupils make is also a major contributing factor to the decline in outcomes in the recent past.
- Outcomes in national tests in 2016 were poor and showed a significant dip from previous years. The school's progress measures compared very poorly with other schools locally and nationally.
- The progress of pupils currently attending the school is inconsistent. Leaders' assessment information lacks any degree of certainty that pupils are making good or better progress. Classroom visits and scrutiny of current pupils' work showed some evidence of progress, but often in subjects other than English or mathematics.
- As a significant majority of pupils come from disadvantaged backgrounds and all pupils have an education, health and care plan, reporting separately for these groups is meaningless.
- The school continues to have success in its vocational education offer. Most pupils leave the school and move on to college or other training. Work experience and good-quality careers guidance help pupils in choosing their future pathways. The school is particularly proud of a recent work-experience placement which secured the offer of an apprenticeship for next year.

## School details

Unique reference number	140732
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10024540

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	Special
School category	Academy special converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	54
Appropriate authority	Gosport and Fareham Multi-Academy Trust
Chair	Kirsty Robertson
Headteacher	Stuart Parker-Tyreman
Telephone number	01489 582684
Website	<a href="http://www.lordwilson.org.uk">www.lordwilson.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@lordwilson.org.uk">admin@lordwilson.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- LWS Academy is a special school which caters for pupils who have social, emotional and mental health difficulties. All of the school's current pupils are boys. All have education, health and care plans. There are currently 49 pupils on roll.
- The school recently converted to academy status, joining the Gosport and Fareham Multi-Academy Trust on 1 April 2017. Therefore, this is the first inspection since the school changed its status to become an academy.
- The school makes use of the following alternative educational placements: Southampton City College, Fareham College, Totton College, Eastleigh College, Youth Options, St Vincent College, For Life Experiences (FLE), Riverside and Military Mentors.

## Information about this inspection

- 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 because the lead inspector had insufficient evidence to confirm that the school remained good by the end of the first day of the inspection.
- The inspection was completed by a different team of inspectors. The second day of the inspection took place within 15 working days of the inspection starting. This inspection was part of an Ofsted pilot to test inspection methodology.
- Inspectors carried out a combination of learning walks and single classroom observations during the inspection. During classroom visits inspectors observed teaching and learning, talked to pupils about their progress and assessed the quality of their work. Some classroom visits were accompanied by senior leaders. Others were carried out by inspectors on their own.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, pupils, the chief executive of the multi-academy trust, and representatives of the local governing committee. Separate telephone conversations were held with two representatives of the local authority and a parent.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of pupils' work, heard pupils read and observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents by taking into account three responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View, and two accompanying free-text messages.
- There were no replies to the online pupil or staff questionnaires. However, inspectors were able to take into account the school's own pupil and staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents including those to do with safeguarding and attendance. They looked at minutes of meetings of the governing body, records of visits by officers from the local authority, information on pupils' outcomes provided by the school, other pupil records and plans, the school's self-evaluation of its own performance and the school's development and improvement planning.

## Inspection team

Clive Close, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Becky Greenhalgh	Ofsted Inspector
Caroline Dulong, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Simon Yates	Ofsted Inspector



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