

Wayland Academy

Merton Road, Watton, Thetford, Norfolk IP25 6BA

Inspection dates

27–28 April 2017

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- A significant minority of pupils do not feel safe at the school. Pupils are rightly concerned about the incidence of bullying and the use of homophobic language by their peers.
- Leaders have not ensured that pupils understand the risks posed by groups or individuals who hold extremist values, beliefs or views. This makes them potentially vulnerable.
- Too many pupils disrupt the learning of others during lessons. Teachers do not apply the school's policies on managing behaviour consistently. This slows the pace of learning for the majority who want to do well.
- Attendance, which is below the national average, has not improved quickly enough, especially that of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Some teachers do not insist that pupils meet their high expectations. Because of this, too many pupils produce shoddy work that is not completed to the best of their ability. Too many errors go unchecked by teachers.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has varied too widely, both across and within subjects. As a result, some pupils have made insufficient progress from their starting points.
- Leaders and governors have not analysed the effectiveness of the use of pupil premium funding carefully enough. The impact of some of the strategies used to support disadvantaged pupils is limited.
- Over time, too many older pupils, including some who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, have had insufficient support to develop their literacy skills. This has limited their progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The principal and other leaders have successfully reversed a decline in the quality of teaching. The impact of teaching on pupils' progress and outcomes is improving, particularly within English.
- Teachers benefit from the support they receive to develop aspects of their teaching, including the opportunity to learn from their colleagues in other academies within the TEN Group.
- The incidence of the most severe and sustained disruption to learning, while still too high, is reducing.
- Leaders have recently introduced new systems to track disadvantaged pupils' progress and to provide extra help for those who need it. This is starting to reduce the difference between the progress made by these pupils and by others of similar ability.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - reducing the incidence of bullying and eradicating pupils' use of homophobic and derogatory language
 - ensuring that pupils have a secure understanding of the dangers of radicalism and extremism, so that the risks posed towards them by those with extreme values, views or beliefs are minimised
 - reviewing the procedures used to manage pupils' attendance, and ensuring that pupils' absence, particularly persistent absence, is tackled effectively so that the attendance of all groups of pupils rises to at least the national average
 - analysing, with governors, the impact of the ways in which pupil premium funding is being used to support disadvantaged pupils, so that resources can be allocated in the most effective manner.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that all teachers:
 - plan learning so that it meets the needs of different pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - follow the school's behaviour policy consistently, so that the incidence of disruption to teaching and learning reduces
 - insist that all pupils complete well-presented work to the best of their ability
 - address the errors that pupils make in spelling, punctuation or the use of grammar, so that they are able to write with increasing accuracy and confidence.

An external review of the school'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

Inadequate

- Leaders have not ensured that pupils feel safe at the school. A significant number of pupils told inspectors they are concerned about the incidence of bullying and the use of homophobic language by some of their peers, which they say that they hear regularly. Although pupils were able to talk about recent incidents of bullying that they or their friends had experienced, the school's last formal record of bullying was made in November 2016.
- Leaders have not ensured that all groups of pupils attend school regularly enough. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils, boys, and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has declined since the previous inspection. Persistent absence, in particular, remains too high. Leaders have strengthened a number of approaches to deal with persistent absence and some recent improvement is evident. However, they have not ensured that increases in attendance are sustained over time. The attendance of some groups of pupils has declined since last year, reversing previous improvements seen.
- Standards of behaviour are not improving quickly enough, particularly in respect of pupils currently in Year 10 and Year 11. The number of occasions on which pupils have to be removed from the classroom, though falling, remains too high.
- The principal, with the support of the governing body and the TEN Group, has prioritised the strengthening of teaching since his appointment to the post in September 2015. Leaders' monitoring and evaluation have identified where strengths and weaknesses lie. This has informed decisions about targets to set individuals, and the provision of support to help them to meet these. Staff are held accountable and tough decisions have been made to challenge underperformance.
- Leaders' actions have started to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and the impact that this has on pupils' learning and progress overall. Some improvements, such as within the teaching of English, have been driven by middle as well as senior leaders and are significant and substantial. However, inconsistencies in the impact that teaching has upon pupils' learning over time remain.
- Since the previous inspection, funding to support disadvantaged pupils has not been used effectively. Leaders have repeated strategies and actions without properly evaluating their effectiveness in raising standards for the pupils. A recently appointed senior leader is monitoring the nature and impact of the help given to disadvantaged pupils and working with middle leaders to improve its effectiveness. The impact of this work is becoming evident, particularly at key stage 3, but it is too early to determine the full extent of it.
- Leaders have recently introduced new approaches to ensure that Year 7 'catch-up' funding helps pupils with low levels of literacy to develop their skills in reading, writing and numeracy. This is helping to support the pupils' learning across different subjects. However, too many older pupils' command of spelling, punctuation and grammar is insecure because over time they have received less high-quality support.

- The principal has made appropriate changes to the curriculum, which have ensured that it is broad and balanced. These changes have included increasing the amount of curriculum time devoted to English and mathematics, which was previously too limited.
- The school's leaders are ensuring that funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is being spent effectively. The special educational needs coordinator assesses the needs of individuals accurately and arranges for these to be met via effective work, often on a one-to-one or small-group basis. Training for staff, for example, on how best to support pupils who have autism, helps them to meet different needs within the classroom. Some older pupils are making less progress than they might because their needs were not well met when they first started at the school.
- There are many opportunities for pupils to get involved in enrichment activities at the school. A large number of younger pupils in particular have responded with enthusiasm to the school's use of a commercial programme that aims to encourage reading for pleasure, with positive impact upon their reading ages.
- Trips and visits such as the history 'battlefields' trip help to promote pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. Funding is being used to enable disadvantaged pupils to take part in enrichment activities.
- A significant proportion of parents and carers responded to Ofsted's questionnaire during the inspection. Most were positive about aspects of the school's provision, but some expressed concerns; among those were comments relating to the quality of teaching and standards of behaviour, including bullying. A significant minority would not recommend the school to another parent.
- It is recommended that the school should not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Governance of the school

- Governors' scrutiny of, and challenge to, the school's leaders has not been sufficient to ensure that pupils are protected from discriminatory language, or that they have the knowledge necessary to protect themselves from radicalisation and extremist views.
- Governors' monitoring of the effectiveness with which leaders make use of additional government funding to support disadvantaged pupils is not secure. Although they track the progress that the pupils are making, they have not analysed the impact, over time, of leaders' use of additional funding carefully enough. During the inspection, governors who spoke with inspectors were unable to explain fully the rationale behind the current ways in which the pupil premium is spent.
- In some respects, governors present robust challenge and appropriate support to the principal and his senior team. They receive detailed information about many aspects of the quality of education provided at the school, undertake visits to assure themselves of the accuracy of the information they are given, and often check that improvements have subsequently taken place. For example, subsequent to the previous inspection governors took determined action to challenge aspects of leadership and of teaching that needed to improve. This has helped to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are inadequate.
- Staff training is up to date, including 'Prevent' duty guidance to help staff to spot pupils who might be at risk of radicalisation or extremism. However, leaders have not acted effectively following the external review that indicated pupils' lack of understanding about these risks. Inspectors spoke with a large number of pupils during the inspection; none was able to demonstrate any knowledge of what these terms might mean or how those with extreme beliefs, values or ideas might seek to promote these and influence the thoughts and actions of others. In this respect, pupils are ill prepared to protect themselves from risk.
- Leaders ensure that all of the required safeguarding checks are carried out when recruiting new staff.
- The designated safeguarding lead works effectively with external agencies to keep children safe. Records of actions taken when a pupil is at risk and in need of support are well organised and securely kept.
- Case studies of actions taken when pupils are at risk indicate that leaders are active when necessary to ensure that decisions about individuals are taken in the best interests of those concerned.
- The checks on the attendance and welfare of those attending off-site alternative provision are adequate.
- Staff make regular checks on the well-being of those pupils who are persistently absent.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Leaders have worked hard to provide pupils with effective teaching characterised by what they term the 'Wayland Guarantee'. However, staffing changes and recruitment issues have undermined this. In addition, the high expectations and carefully planned teaching and learning seen within and across many subjects is not evident within others. These factors affect the progress that pupils make.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that over time the activities that they complete do not develop their skills in subjects effectively enough. For some pupils, activities are too easy or too difficult. When this is the case, or when activities do not follow on from previous learning, pupils lose focus and some misbehave.
- Some teachers do not expect enough of pupils. Evidence seen in lessons and through scrutiny of pupils' books indicates that the care they take over their work varies between and within subjects. Some teachers do not routinely ensure that pupils catch up on work that they miss due to absence, which limits the pupils' progress.
- Teachers do not consistently apply the school's policy for providing feedback to pupils about their learning. This means that guidance often lacks clarity and so pupils are unable to correct mistakes or take the next steps in their learning.
- Too often, teachers do not correct pupils when they make errors in their spelling of common words and those specific to certain subjects. As a result, pupils continue to

make the same mistakes. Additionally, the extent to which pupils complete extended written work within and across subjects is too variable. Because of this, the ability of some to develop fully coherent answers when responding to questions at length is limited.

- Teaching is increasingly effective. Pupils learn most when teachers use a range of techniques to engage their interest, check their understanding and fulfil the 'Wayland Guarantee' by delivering activities that offer appropriate challenge to pupils of all abilities. During these lessons, pupils concentrate well on the task at hand and are keen to answer questions, discuss and debate. They make secure gains in their knowledge and understanding as a result. During a Year 7 history lesson, for example, all pupils were able to use their factual knowledge to write at length about the impact of slavery on the emotional health of African Americans.
- Teachers often use their secure knowledge of what pupils can and cannot do when deciding which activities they should complete next. These teachers are aware of misconceptions that pupils have, and make sure that they unravel these before moving forward. This ensures that pupils have secure knowledge and skills upon which to build. During a Year 9 mathematics lesson, these techniques helped pupils to apply rotation to two-dimensional transformations successfully.
- Many teachers, particularly within the English department, are prioritising the needs of disadvantaged pupils, especially boys, when they plan learning. They use a range of strategies that ensure that these pupils are engaged in their learning. They monitor their progress carefully, and provide effective and timely support that helps individuals get back on track.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Surveys carried out recently by the school's leaders indicate that a significant minority of pupils do not feel safe. Pupils' conversations with inspectors confirmed this. These pupils are concerned about the prevalence of bullying, and the casual use of unacceptable language, including homophobic abuse, which they say that they hear regularly. Some such language was heard during the inspection.
- Many pupils commented that they were uncertain whether adults in the school would deal with bullying or name-calling effectively. A small number said that they would not want a younger sibling to join the school because of these concerns.
- None of the many pupils spoken with by inspectors demonstrated an understanding of the risks posed by individuals or groups with extremist beliefs who might try to persuade them to act in an unlawful or antisocial way.
- A small number of parents and pupils are concerned about pupils smoking within the school site. Inspectors witnessed pupils smoking during the inspection. A significant proportion of pupils who responded to a recent school survey did not think that the school encourages them to live healthy lifestyles.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of how to stay safe online, including when using

social networking sites, because of the effective guidance that they receive.

- The school's monitoring information indicates that the pupils who attend alternative provision off-site attend well, behave appropriately and are well looked after.
- Information about 'next steps' in terms of further education or training is impartial and of high quality. As a result, pupils are able to pursue courses that are a good match for their interests, aspirations and abilities when they leave the school at the end of Year 11. The proportion who are not in education, employment or training after that point has fallen and is below the national average.
- Leaders raise pupils' aspirations and help them to become ready for the workplace via organising appropriate work experience. Pupils also appreciated their visit to a local university, which offers many their first insight into undergraduate life and study, and encourages them to consider this option when they might otherwise not have done so.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- Attendance has declined since the previous inspection and it remains too low. Rates of persistent absence are significantly in excess of the national average, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and for those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Although there has been some recent improvement due to leaders having strengthened monitoring and intervention procedures, progress in reducing absence has been inconsistent. Persistent absence is higher for some groups now than was the case last year.
- Pupils spoken with during the inspection whose attendance is low did not demonstrate a sufficient understanding of the consequences of low attendance upon their progress.
- A significant minority of pupils do not behave well and do not demonstrate positive attitudes to learning in the classroom. The school's own monitoring information indicates that the majority of pupils do not think that behaviour at the school is good.
- Leaders have introduced changes to the procedures that staff use to manage unacceptable behaviour. Pupils understand these procedures but feel that their impact is limited because not all staff use them consistently or effectively. Most pupils who spoke with inspectors said that disruptive behaviour often slows the pace of their learning, and that this is a particular problem within lessons that are not taught by their usual class teachers.
- Despite a recent decline, the proportion of pupils who are excluded for more serious misbehaviour remains too high. Disadvantaged pupils are disproportionately likely to be excluded from the school for fixed periods of time.
- Too often, pupils complete work untidily. A small number sometimes arrive late to lessons and this is not challenged sufficiently by the teachers, either effectively or at all.
- Behaviour is positive when teachers have high expectations, ensure that pupils complete suitably challenging work and use the school's behaviour management procedures appropriately. Although there is still too much disruption, positive behaviour that aids learning is increasing as the quality of teaching improves.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2016 public examinations, disadvantaged boys and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities made too little progress overall, and the difference between the progress made by these groups compared with other pupils nationally with the same starting points was too wide.
- Evidence from visits to lessons and work scrutiny indicate that pupils' progress overall, and the progress of disadvantaged pupils in particular, is too variable, both across and within different subject areas. Disadvantaged pupils in Year 11, for example, have made less progress over time in English than others with the same starting points because improvements in teaching have been too recent to close the gaps fully in these pupils' knowledge and understanding caused by weak teaching in the past.
- Scrutiny of pupils' books indicates that those who are persistently absent often do not catch up the work that they have missed promptly, if at all. This means that they find it difficult to tackle new tasks because the foundations of their skills and knowledge are not secure.
- Public examination results at the school did not meet the government's minimum floor standards in 2014 and 2015. Leaders have taken steps to strengthen teaching: as a result of these improvements, pupils made good progress overall in mathematics in 2016 and stronger progress in English than had been the case previously. Attainment in both subjects improved and the proportion of pupils who attained at least five A* to C GCSE passes including in English and mathematics rose significantly, and represented the school's best ever results in this respect.
- Current pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make variable progress. The school's leaders acknowledge that this is because some pupils currently in Year 10 and Year 11 did not receive the support that they needed to develop their literacy skills when they originally joined the school. Younger pupils are making better progress because they are now receiving the support that they need.
- Improvements in teaching have made more of an impact upon the progress of pupils who have joined the school recently. For example, the differences between the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and that of others who have the same starting points are diminishing.
- The most able pupils currently studying at the school, including those who are disadvantaged, typically make strong progress from their starting points. This is because these pupils work hard and are usually given tasks to complete that are, in the words of one pupil, 'hard enough to really make you think, but not so tough that you can't make a start'.
- The school's monitoring information indicates that the Year 11 pupils who are currently completing courses in construction at an off-site alternative provider are attending well and making good progress.

School details

Unique reference number	137949
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10023512

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
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	589
Appropriate authority	The trust
Chair	Mr Carl Evans
Principal	Mr Glen Allott
Telephone number	01953 881514
Website	www.waylandacademy.org.uk
Email address	head@waylandacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	27–28 February 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- Wayland Academy is a smaller-than-average sized secondary school. It is part of the TEN Group, a multi-academy trust within Norfolk.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language is below that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below

average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above average.

- The principal and other senior leaders took up their posts subsequent to the previous inspection.
- The school meets the current government floor standards.
- The school uses alternative provision. A small number of pupils are studying construction at City College Norwich.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 30 lessons or parts of lessons and four tutor sessions.
- The inspection team spoke with pupils in lessons, at break and lunchtime, and in small groups.
- Inspectors met with the principal, members of the senior and wider leadership team; subject and other leaders; teachers; two governors; a representative from the local authority; and a representative from a local teaching school that is supporting the school in its work.
- Inspectors scrutinised documentation, including: the academy self-evaluation and improvement plan; minutes of governing body meetings; analysis of surveys conducted by school leaders; and documents relating to pupil progress and outcomes, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors also considered 74 parent responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 35 written parental responses. They also took account of pupils' views and staff views.

Inspection team

Jason Howard, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sean Powell	Ofsted Inspector
Cathy Tooze	Ofsted Inspector
Jeremy Rowe	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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