

The Barnes Wallis Academy

Butts Lane, Tattershall, Lincoln, Lincolnshire LN4 4PN

Inspection dates

5–6 July 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Senior leaders have an uncompromising ambition for the school. Since the appointment of the executive principal, highly effective leadership has led to strong teaching, pupils' excellent behaviour and attendance, and higher attainment.
- Pupils are extremely proud of their school. They show high levels of respect and consideration for others. Their behaviour in and around the school is of an exceptionally high standard.
- Governors and trustees are committed and highly effective. The sharp challenge given by the local governing body and the David Ross Education Trust has contributed to the strong performance of the school.
- From low starting points, pupils in Year 11 in 2016 made progress that was higher than the national average. They achieved well in many subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Teaching is improving and is now good. This is because of the high-quality support and monitoring provided by senior leaders and the trust. However, not all middle leaders rigorously use monitoring systems.
- Disadvantaged pupils, especially those who had low starting points, made good progress in a range of subjects at the end of key stage 4.
- The care for pupils, including those who are young carers, is exceptional. As a result, young carers develop the confidence to take part in lessons and experience success.
- Leaders have created a well-designed curriculum, which provides wide-ranging opportunities for pupils to secure their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school's systems to promote positive behaviour and high attendance are very effective. Rewards and sanctions are used consistently by staff. Attendance is higher than the national average.
- Although leaders have trained staff to use information about pupils' achievement to plan lessons carefully, this is not consistently happening across the school.
- A clear set of strong community values underpins the school's ethos. The excellent relationships between pupils and adults contribute significantly to the very positive atmosphere in classrooms and around the school.
- Some teachers do not consistently follow the school's requirement to check that pupils have acted on the advice they are given about how to improve their work.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that:
 - teachers consistently apply the school’s policy to provide pupils with helpful guidance when they mark their work, and ensure that pupils act on such advice
 - teachers consistently use information about pupils’ ongoing achievement to ensure that pupils are set work that enables them to make maximum progress.
- Ensure that middle leaders contribute more fully to school improvement by checking rigorously on the effectiveness of their teams.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since his appointment, the executive principal has taken firm and decisive action to implement a culture of higher expectations of both staff and pupils. With the support of other senior leaders, he has focused unremittingly on improving the quality of teaching, pupils' attitudes to learning and wider opportunities for pupils. This focus has been successful.
- The trust gives highly effective support and challenge to the school. School leaders have developed strong links with other schools in the trust. This has enabled leaders at all levels to improve their skills in areas such as understanding the new GCSE grades. Consequently, outcomes for pupils have been rising each year.
- Leaders and managers have an accurate view of what is working well in the school and where improvements are necessary. Their plans for development focus well on the most important priorities and the targets they set are appropriately measurable.
- Senior leaders have rightly increased the rigour with which they manage teachers' performance. Teachers' performance targets focus strongly on pupils' achievement, including the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have worked firmly but fairly with teachers when performance has not been good enough, and this has led to improvements in teaching.
- The school uses the additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils and the catch-up funding for Year 7 pupils who start school with below average literacy and numeracy skills. Leaders regularly review the support these pupils receive and adapt the support as appropriate. As a result, the attainment of those pupils who are eligible for this funding, and who have previously fallen behind, is now catching up with that of their peers.
- The well-designed curriculum enables pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills across a broad range of subjects. Leaders recognised the limitations the small size of the school was having on the curriculum. Consequently, leaders have worked effectively with other local schools in the trust to ensure that the three sciences and computer science are now available in key stage 4.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very well organised. The school's personal, social, health and careers education programme (PSHCE), together with assemblies and charity work, provides pupils with effective opportunities to consider their place in the community, both within the school and beyond. This is enhanced by an excellent range of visits that are valued by pupils. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the need to show respect and consideration to others.
- A comprehensive programme of advice and guidance ensures that pupils are well informed about their options for careers, education and training. Opportunities to represent the school in sports events, raise money for charity in the Interact Club and visit regional universities further enhance the curriculum and help prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.

- Many leaders have more than one role because of the small size of the school. Training from the trust has helped to develop senior leaders' skills, and standards are rising. However, middle leaders do not make as strong a contribution to school improvement because the checks on their team's performance lack some rigour.

Governance of the school

- The academy improvement board and the trust have high aspirations and expectations of the pupils. They visit the school frequently and talk with pupils and staff and, therefore, they know the school well. They can see clearly which strategies have brought about improvements and where there is still work to do. Governors use this understanding to provide challenge to leaders.
- Governors and trustees are highly skilled and have the necessary expertise to both support and challenge leaders. They could talk knowledgeably about the progress of current pupils in the school. An analysis of the minutes of the governing body meetings confirms that they are kept well informed of pupils' progress.
- The governors review thoroughly information about pupils' achievement, attendance and behaviour. They check how the quality of teaching and learning is developing and hold leaders to account for any weaknesses.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The single central record of checks on staff is appropriate and is routinely checked by members of the governing body and trust. Staff files are well maintained. The appointments of staff meet all statutory requirements.
- There is a strong ethos that sets the safety of pupils as the highest priority. Leaders work closely with external agencies to ensure that appropriate action is taken to keep the most vulnerable pupils safe.
- Staff are well trained on any signs of abuse and on the most up-to-date guidance around safeguarding pupils. There is a range of trained leaders who assist staff and pupils to keep safe.
- Leaders have tackled some groups of pupils' absence robustly and are tenacious in chasing up non-attendance. As a result, the attendance, which is now higher than the national average, is contributing well to pupils' well-being, safety and progress.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good, with some that is of very high quality. Teachers make good use of resources, including textbooks and classroom displays. They use their good subject knowledge to explain content and tasks to pupils clearly and enthuse them with interest in the topic.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent. Teachers and pupils are quick

to point out the importance of the part the school's system to promote positive behaviour and attitudes has played in this. Teachers have established purposeful classroom routines, which pupils follow without question. This enables lessons to progress smoothly without interruption.

- Teachers ask questions that prompt pupils to think about their answers and explanations. In a Year 7 English lesson, pupils were keen to develop their letter writing skills, using a Dickens novel as a prompt. The teacher skilfully used appropriate questioning for individual pupils so that they could deepen their knowledge.
- Most teaching meets the needs of a range of pupils well. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported to ensure that their needs are identified and met in the classroom, including the use of well-trained additional adults.
- As required by the school's policy, teachers' marking and feedback often give guidance on how to improve in a subject. However, not all teachers consistently apply the school's policy to provide useful guidance to pupils on how to improve their work and then to check that they have acted on this.
- There is a growing culture of reading in the school. Leaders have been effective in supporting weaker readers who are new to the school. Inspectors listened to these readers. Where problems arise for the less-confident readers, they are able to successfully sound out the word. Pupils talked positively about the time given for reading and for the space given to reading in the school library.
- Teachers know their pupils well and inspectors saw teachers using their annotated plans to deploy successful strategies to support the less able pupils and stretch the most able pupils. At its best, teaching challenges pupils of all abilities. However, some teachers did not set work which matches closely pupils' skills and abilities.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils develop into confident, articulate and enthusiastic young people who aspire to achieve the very best they can. They wear their uniform proudly and immaculately. They are extremely proud of their school and the opportunities it provides for them. They value the support of their teachers and staff and appreciate the improvements brought about by leaders.
- Pupils are taught how to stay safe in school and within their community. Leaders take care to check the attendance, welfare and progress of any pupils on alternative provision. Pupils discuss e-safety, drugs awareness, healthy relationships and much more. Pupils say that they have confidence in the staff to deal with any issues that they take to them.
- The school takes in a growing number of pupils from other local schools. The support for these pupils is exemplary. One pupil told inspectors that the school was 'like one big family that you really trust'. As a result, pupils feel confident in making friends from all year groups, taking part in lessons and joining in sports and arts events outside the

school day.

- Pupils have excellent opportunities to express their views, especially during form time, where pupils were seen confidently discussing national news stories. Others enjoy representing the school in the local community, for example supporting the elderly throughout the year.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- The school is a clean, tidy, litter-free and welcoming environment, awash with displays of pupils' work and the vision of the school.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school is exceptional. They arrive promptly to lessons and settle to their work very quickly. As a result, learning proceeds very quickly and without interruption. Pupils listen to each other's views respectfully and give thoughtful feedback about what their classmates have to say.
- Pupils are polite and very welcoming to visitors, holding doors open for them as they walk round the school, and eager to talk about what they enjoy. During break and lunchtimes, pupils mix together well and behave very sensibly. Pupils of all backgrounds and ages get on well together.
- Behaviour has improved over time. Leaders changed the policy last year and teachers and pupils told inspectors that this has been effective. As a result, fixed-term exclusions have reduced to a very low level.
- Leaders have successfully communicated to pupils and parents the need to attend school. Attendance is now above the national average for all pupils. Disadvantaged pupils' attendance is rising rapidly. Attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is now above the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils enter the school with attainment significantly below the national average. In 2016, from their low starting points, Year 11 pupils made good progress in a wide range of subjects that was in line with that of other pupils nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved GCSEs at grades A* to C in both English and mathematics has risen significantly over the last few years. It is now higher than the national average.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress in a number of subjects and this is improving year on year. Their attainment, often from low starting points, is improving. The difference between their attainment and that of other pupils nationally with the same starting points is diminishing over time.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress overall, with some making excellent progress in mathematics. A review of current pupils' workbooks showed that these pupils continue to make good progress across all year groups.
- Leaders have gone to great lengths, working with partners in the trust, to ensure that

their progress data is as accurate as it can be. This information and the detailed scrutiny of pupils' workbooks show that pupils across the ability range in all years are making good progress.

- In 2016, science results showed some underperformance. Leaders have acted decisively and inspection evidence and the school's assessment information show that pupils are now making good progress in this subject. The school has also ensured that all three sciences at GCSE will be offered in partnership with the local trust schools.
- Valuable careers advice and guidance, together with much-improved achievement, are securing better destinations for pupils when they leave school. In 2016, the overwhelming majority of pupils who left Year 11 entered employment, education or training routes. The school's own information showed that this is set to improve even further this year.

School details

Unique reference number	141166
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10020976

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	312
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Paul Ainsworth
Interim Principal	Emma Day
Telephone number	01526 342379
Website	www.barneswallisacademy.co.uk/
Email address	enquiries@barneswallisacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

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 guidance on what academies should publish.
- This is a much smaller-than-average secondary school.
- Since July 2014, the school has been sponsored by the David Ross Education Trust.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups is much smaller than average.

- The school works with one alternative provider, the Hospital School.
- In 2016, the school met the government's current floor standards for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of key stage 4.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 parts of lessons, two assemblies and tutor time. Some lessons were jointly observed with the interim principal and other senior leaders. Inspectors listened to some pupils in key stages 3 and 4 read and talked to them about their reading experience.
- Inspectors held meetings with the interim principal, senior leaders, middle leaders and representatives from the local governing body and the trust. Inspectors reviewed a range of school documentation, including that related to safeguarding, achievement, attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors looked at the 16 parental responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Inspectors also analysed the school's own parental surveys.
- There were no responses to the Ofsted online survey of staff.
- Throughout the two days of the inspection, inspectors spoke with pupils, both formally and informally, about their learning and safety.

Inspection team

Harkireet Sohel, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
John Edwards	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew Sammy	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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