

# The Warren School

Whalebone Lane North, Chadwell Heath, Romford, Essex RM6 6SB

## Inspection dates

6–7 December 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
16 to 19 study programmes	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher and his team have successfully raised standards across the school since becoming an academy. Leaders have successfully embedded the trust's systems and procedures. This means that pupils make good progress in a safe, welcoming and productive learning environment.
- Governors and trust members are effective in holding leaders to account. Leaders are sharp in their identification of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, their strategies for development are focused and effective.
- Pupils experience good teaching, learning and assessment across most subjects. Teachers tease out pupils' prior knowledge so that good progress is made from their starting points. This is not yet the case in modern foreign languages, however.
- Pupils' outcomes at GCSE have improved in the last three years, so that pupils' attainment is now good. Pupils make particularly strong progress in English and creative and performing arts subjects.
- 16 to 19 study programmes are good because students build on their prior learning effectively. Students make wise decisions about their A-level and vocational courses that set them up well for life after school.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have ensured that secure policies and procedures underpin a strong culture of safeguarding.
- Pupils' personal development is well supported by a broad range of activities and enrichment. Leaders carefully plan the enrichment programme so pupils from all backgrounds benefit.
- Pupils' behaviour is good, and particularly strong in the sixth form. Sixth-form students act as role models to the rest of the school. Pupils want to learn, and so attend regularly. They rarely disrupt learning and build positive relationships with one another and staff.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development improves throughout their time in school. This is a particular strength.
- Teachers are good at helping pupils make progress from low starting points. There is inconsistency in how well teachers stretch and challenge the most able.
- Leaders recognise that, as the sixth form grows, greater focus is required on the performance of particular groups of students, including the growing proportion of high prior-attainers.

## Full report

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

- Improve pupils' outcomes and progress by:
  - teachers in modern foreign languages using assessment more effectively and planning activities that enhance pupils' foreign language skills effectively
  - stretching the most able pupils consistently well so that their progress at least matches that of lower prior-attaining pupils.
- Improve the leadership of the sixth form so that systems and strategies more effectively focus on students' progress as the provision grows, particularly those with high prior attainment.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders throughout the school share a common focus that pupils deserve the best possible education and opportunities to prepare for life after school. This principle underpins the school's work. Consequently, the school's improvement since becoming an academy has been significant, particularly in instilling a belief in pupils that education matters and they can achieve their increasingly high aspirations.
- Wide-ranging improvements to school systems and procedures accompanied the arrival of the trust. Consequently, fundamentally crucial aspects of the school's work, including around behaviour, attendance and welfare, were swiftly improved. Changes to staffing structures have been implemented that encourage staff to work collaboratively. This has improved the effectiveness of leaders' work because staff are on board.
- Middle leaders are empowered and supported to make purposeful changes within their areas of responsibility. New staff make a positive difference because existing structures are robust. For example, the recently appointed special educational needs coordinator is rapidly developing a new strategy to make information about pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities more easily accessible to all staff. The support that pupils receive through nurture groups is effective in developing basic academic and life skills.
- Teachers receive useful support to improve their skills, particularly where leaders identify concerns. Trust-wide professional development programmes link well to teachers' appraisal targets. Those targets link to pupils' progress and development so that teachers' work focuses on achieving the best for pupils. Developments in English, humanities and mathematics demonstrate the effectiveness of the school's improvement strategies. Modern foreign languages remains an area for improvement.
- Leaders use pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding on programmes that successfully improve pupils' achievement and personal development. The successful integration of the library and online resources into weekly tutor time and curriculum routines helps pupils develop a real enjoyment of reading.
- The curriculum is carefully planned. Leaders believe in pupils' entitlement to good learning that builds strongly on key stage 2. Over time, leaders have successfully improved most areas of the curriculum so that pupils make at least good progress. The wide range of enrichment opportunities, including trips, visits and clubs, broadens the academic curriculum well.
- Pupils learn about the world around them through subject lessons, assemblies, enrichment and the personal, social, health and economic curriculum. Pupils have a strong understanding of contemporary issues, understand their future role in society and demonstrate respect and tolerance for all. Equality sits at the heart of the school's work and enhances pupils' positive attitudes towards one another and adults.

### Governance of the school

- Governors and the trust are effective in holding leaders to account so that pupils' performance and personal development improve over time. The CEO and chair of

governors know the school well. They leave no stone unturned when asking leaders questions about the impact of their strategies. Governors and trust members work closely together and with the leadership team to embed improvement.

- Governors are far from complacent and are determined that the school continues to improve and becomes an exceptional place of learning. They seek training to improve their skills and call on support from the trust appropriately. The governance of the school is challenging and supportive.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. This is because protocols, training and partnerships with external agencies work well. Staff know their responsibilities and understand that no issue is too small to consider carefully. Staff are skilled at monitoring pupils' performance, behaviour and attendance, making links as necessary so that the right support is identified. Pupils reported to inspectors that they feel safe and cared for at school. Staff are all 'go to' people that pupils feel that they can trust.
- Staff and pupils share a good understanding of the risks that children face. The risks associated with gangs, online and social media, female genital mutilation, child sexual exploitation and radicalisation are all well understood because of the training, lessons and assemblies that raise awareness.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Pupils arrive at lessons ready to learn. Their positive attitudes to learning mean that few barriers exist. Teachers ask probing questions that are particularly effective at challenging those from low starting points.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and ensure that pupils' misconceptions are quickly challenged. This develops pupils' interest in the subject or topic and demonstrates teachers' confidence and willingness for pupils to ask them searching questions.
- Teachers' planning successfully takes account of pupils' needs, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. Activities are typically well chosen to deepen pupils' knowledge from their starting points. Time in lessons is used productively and, as a result, there is very little disruption to learning.
- Pupils complete homework promptly, which is set to extend their learning and does so effectively. In the sixth form, additional home study is sometimes determined by the students. For example, the outcome of an A-level psychology debate in class led to a student asking a question that prompted further research at home.
- Teachers' commitment to their own development is evident in consistently good teaching, learning and assessment over time. This is demonstrated in the feedback pupils receive, which reflects an ongoing dialogue between pupils and teachers about their learning.
- The most able are well challenged in English and in creative arts subjects. A whole-school focus on challenging the most able is improving the level of stretch across subjects, for example through extended writing in history. However, the most able are

not consistently well challenged in other subjects, such as languages.

- Good teaching, learning and assessment have resulted in good standards, overall. Improvements in English, mathematics, science and humanities have not yet been matched by the same consistency and quality in modern foreign languages, where pupils make less progress. This is because assessment and activities are less skilfully used to engage and motivate pupils to learn.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Through the curriculum, including in extra-curricular activities, pupils receive a wealth of opportunities to prepare for life after school. The careers advice and guidance that pupils receive from Year 8 is effective in raising aspirations and increasing pupils' awareness of the range of options available to them.
- Pupils' self-confidence is noteworthy. Pupils are keen to debate and reflect on their work, and resilient to sometimes getting it wrong. Pupils were observed enjoying debate, listening to one another with respect, before then offering their own views.
- Through the student council, pupils have a say in the development of the school, including, for example, improvement to the canteen. Sixth-form students now have new computers to use in the sixth -form centre because of their negotiation.
- Pupils' achievements are celebrated throughout the school. Many pupils' uniforms feature badges representing all manner of successes and membership of clubs. For example, pupils told inspectors about how they are awarded with 'pupil of the week' badges for exemplifying the school's values outside of school.
- Pupils report that everyone is welcome at their school. Equality sits at the heart of everything and difference is celebrated. Pupils report bullying to be rare and well managed, should it happen. This is reflected in the school's records.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe outside of school. They also learn about how to maintain healthy lifestyles and whom to contact, should they have any concerns. Consequently, pupils are safe and feel safe at this school.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct over time is good. Very few instances of poor behaviour were observed, which reflects the school's records. During break and lunchtimes, pupils socialise, play games and conduct themselves well.
- Year team coordinators work closely with achievement team leaders to ensure that pupils' behaviour and attendance supports good learning. Leaders have a wealth of information available that they use to identify issues promptly and respond accordingly.
- Staff and pupils know and use behaviour routines well. This has resulted in a reduction in the number of fixed-term exclusions. Strategies in place to minimise time lost

through exclusion are effective.

- Pupils' attendance has improved and is better than typical for secondary schools. Persistent absence is low because the school has effective strategies in place to remove barriers to good attendance. There is particularly good evidence of the school's effective support for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, who previously had high levels of persistent absence.
- Pupils take pride in their school and the vast majority of those spoken to on inspection would recommend the school. This demonstrates the change in attitudes of pupils since the school became an academy, which is also reflected in parent and staff feedback.

### Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupils' outcomes at GCSE have improved year on year since 2014. Pupils' attainment also shows improvement across the core curriculum. In 2017, progress in English and in subjects that contribute towards the open element of the school's GCSE progress score (such as creative and performing arts, physical education and vocational subjects) was significantly better than average. Progress in mathematics was in line with the national average.
- Pupils join the school typically with lower than average attainment. Catch-up support in literacy and mathematics, alongside support funded by the pupil premium, rapidly diminishes difference between eligible pupils and their peers. Disadvantaged pupils' progress in GCSEs last year was in line with their peers nationally, and better than disadvantaged pupils nationally. This continues to be the case for current disadvantaged pupils across year groups.
- Pupils receive regular opportunities to use their literacy skills to good effect. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make particularly quick gains in their writing and comprehension so that they can enjoy mainstream lessons. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make consistently good progress across the curriculum because they are increasingly well supported by teaching assistants and staff.
- The careers advice and guidance that pupils receive, including external speakers and trips, effectively prepares pupils for their subsequent education, training and employment. Very few pupils leave school without a sustained education or employment option. Increasing numbers of students leave the sixth form to go on to university courses and apprenticeships.
- Current pupils' progress is good because teachers understand their needs well and plan accordingly. Lessons are typically fun and engaging because activities are effective at getting pupils to think hard. However, the most able are not consistently well challenged across the curriculum, and so their progress is weaker than that of their peers.
- Progress in humanities and languages was weak last year. Current progress in humanities across key stages 3 and 4 is much better now because of effective leadership support. However, progress in languages continues to lag behind, due to weaker teaching and assessment practices.

## 16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Effective and well-tailored advice and guidance means that students make the right choices when selecting their 16 to 19 study programmes. Leaders have put together a comprehensive programme that takes into account students' starting points, ambitions and needs. This includes effective work experience opportunities.
- The vast majority of students complete their study programmes, and few change subjects mid-year. The sixth form is growing, with increasing numbers of the school's Year 11 choosing to stay on and study here.
- Students study a combination of A-level and vocational equivalents, and make good progress overall because of effective teaching. Weaker subjects are quickly improving through effective support that is targeted at specific issues. This means that improvements are quick. For example, leaders' understanding of national changes to the assessment of vocational courses means that appropriate alterations have been made to the support that students receive.
- Students' behaviour is often impeccable. Students lead by example for younger pupils.
- Students have a deep awareness of and play an active part in their personal development. They are ambitious and want to achieve. Consequently, students participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities and events that build links between their academic learning and preparation for life after school.
- 16 to 19 study programme outcomes are good. As the sixth form has grown, more students are joining with higher prior attainment. The inconsistency in effective challenge to stretch the most able lower down the school applies in the sixth form as well. Consequently, attainment is rising over time and progress is good, but the most able could do better.
- Leadership of the sixth form is good. Smaller numbers of students in the past meant that improvements could focus on individuals. Leaders recognise the need to focus more strategically on groups of students' performance, particularly the growing proportion of students with high prior attainment at GCSE.

## School details

Unique reference number	141178
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	10041389

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 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,203
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	227
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Paul Randall
Headteacher	Richard Micek
Telephone number	020 8270 4500
Website	<a href="http://www.thewarrenschoo.net">www.thewarrenschoo.net</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@thewarrenschoo.net">office@thewarrenschoo.net</a>
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 Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- In September 2014, The Warren School became part of the Loxford Schools Trust multi-academy trust. The headteacher has been in post substantively since that time. Governance responsibility lies with the local governing body, which is, in turn, held to account by the trust board.
- The school is larger than average for secondary schools in England. There is a higher



than average proportion of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and a larger than typical proportion of pupils have SEN and/or disabilities, including education, health and care plans.

- No off-site alternative provision is currently used.
- The school has an on-site resource provision for pupils who have moderate learning difficulties.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 64 parts of lessons to observe learning and scrutinise pupils' work. Members of the school's leadership team accompanied many of these observations.
- Inspectors observed pupils during social times and when moving between lessons.
- Inspectors held meetings with leaders, staff, trust staff and the chair of governors and vice-chair of the trust. Inspectors held formal and informal discussions with pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised school documentation, including: policies and procedures; records relating to safeguarding arrangements, including the single central record; assessment, behaviour and attendance information; medical and incident records; leaders' evaluations of the school's performance and plans for development; and appraisal and professional development records.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed by the 91 staff who responded to Ofsted's online survey and the 18 parents who submitted comments via their survey. Inspectors took account of the 314 responses on Parent View over the last 365 days. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

## Inspection team

Matt Tiplin, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Carolyn Dickinson	Her Majesty's Inspector
Anthony Felsenstein	Ofsted Inspector
David Plumeridge	Ofsted Inspector
Tim Williams	Ofsted Inspector

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