

Wicklea Academy

Wick Road, Brislington, Bristol BS4 4HR

Inspection dates

5–6 December 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	Good
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, including governors, have not taken effective action to ensure that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders have not been effective in ensuring that disadvantaged pupils attend school as regularly as they should.
- Governors do not hold leaders firmly to account for the quality of education that pupils receive.
- Governors do not regularly check, evaluate and challenge the key priorities for the school.
- Senior and middle leaders have historically been unable to make improvements to teaching, learning and assessment. Consequently, pupils' progress has stalled.
- Teachers do not consistently ensure that assessment is used to move pupils on in their learning.
- Teachers do not have consistently high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. This is particularly so for disadvantaged pupils. The overall quality of their work and the progress they make suffer as a result of this.
- Pupils, particularly the most able, do not make the progress of which they are capable, especially with their reasoning work in mathematics.
- The curriculum does not allow pupils across the school to apply their reading, writing and mathematical skills across a wider range of subjects.

The school has the following strengths

- The recently appointed members to the leadership team are having an immediate and positive impact. Leaders' ambition is already improving teaching and learning across the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are well mannered, courteous and polite.
- Pupils in some year groups make accelerated progress because teachers have high expectations of them.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is well developed.
- The relationships between teachers and pupils are strong. Pupils enjoy coming to school and take a pride in the leadership roles that they are given.
- The vast majority of parents would recommend the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, by:
 - ensuring that governors have an accurate and detailed understanding of the quality of education at the school
 - ensuring that governors hold leaders to account for pupils' achievement
 - ensuring that governors robustly check and regularly test the impact of the newly implemented strategies to speed up the progress that all pupils make, including those who are disadvantaged
 - ensuring that leaders robustly check and regularly test the impact of strategies to ensure that disadvantaged pupils attend school regularly
 - ensuring that senior and middle leaders are able to use their knowledge and understanding of their subjects to improve outcomes for all pupils.
- Improve the consistency of teaching and learning to ensure that pupils make good progress and reach the standards of which they are capable, by:
 - ensuring that teachers make better use of assessment so that pupils are able to be moved on in their learning more quickly
 - ensuring that teachers make effective use of time to challenge all pupils, especially the most able, to develop their reasoning skills in mathematics, ensuring that a wider range of assessment information is used to track and check the progress of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities
 - ensuring that teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' presentation, particularly that of boys in mathematics
 - continuing to raise the attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by broadening the opportunities that pupils have to apply their writing skills in different subjects across the curriculum.

An external review of governance and of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not placed enough importance on improving outcomes for pupils over time. This has led to declining achievement, particularly in reading and mathematics, over the past two years.
- Leaders and governors have not shown enough rigour and scrutiny over time. Consequently, they have not had a direct impact in securing good outcomes for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics, including those who are disadvantaged and those who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Until recently, leaders have been constrained by systems which have not recognised the individual needs and character of the school. Middle leaders have not been able to make the necessary changes to the curriculum and consequently pupils' progress has slowed.
- Pupil premium funding is not used as well as it should be. Although leaders have a clear understanding of the needs of individual pupils, there is not a robust plan in place to support the learning of such pupils. Previous lessons learned about using funding to support pupils' progress have not always been adhered to. In some classes, work planned for disadvantaged pupils meets their individual needs well. However, this is not consistently so and limits the progress of disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders have not taken effective action to improve the poor attendance of disadvantaged pupils. As a result, the progress that these pupils make is slow because they do not attend regularly.
- Leaders do not ensure that the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium additional funding are used effectively. Although funding has been used to develop the provision for all pupils, particularly in providing greater access to both competitive experiences in and outside of school, the current plan lacks sufficient detail. It also fails to convey the expected impact that this funding will have on pupils and staff.
- Leaders, including some new to post, have become more focused and are making effective changes to the development of the school. Examples include implementing a new approach to marking and ensuring that teachers regularly evaluate the progress that all groups of pupils are making. These changes, while still new, are beginning to have a positive impact on standards.
- Senior and middle leaders have a very clear picture of both the strengths and areas of development in their respective subjects or areas. School improvement priorities in key areas, such as English and mathematics, are thorough and accurate. Consequently, senior and middle leaders have clear capacity to improve standards.
- Leaders are beginning to make changes to the school's curriculum. Leaders are aware from recent monitoring that the curriculum is not as broad as it should be and, because of this, pupils across the school do not always consistently apply their reading, writing and mathematical skills across a wider range of subjects. As a result, pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. In some year groups, pupils make the most of opportunities to apply their writing skills. However, in subjects such as science, pupils do not always use their mathematical skills when considering results. The

changes that leaders are making, while still very new, demonstrate their capacity to tackle these inconsistencies and to raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum gives pupils every opportunity to reflect on their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. For example, pupils are voted by their peers to become part of a team who champion equality and diversity. This promotes a strong ethos in the school and prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to the online survey, Parent View, reported that they are pleased with the school and would recommend it. One parent summed up the views of many, by explaining that the school was 'a well led, warm and friendly school that combines professionalism and loving care'; and another commented that 'the headteacher is a very accessible and approachable school leader who celebrates successes with the children'.

Governance of the school

- Governors have not been sufficiently effective or strategic in tackling key weaknesses. Although there have been recent changes to the way in which governors operate, over the past two years they have not been effective in preventing declining outcomes in key subjects.
- Governors do not hold leaders to account with enough rigour. They rely too heavily on what they are told or what they are shown. They do not probe deeply, or challenge the outcomes which have historically been in decline. As a result, pupils have not made sufficient progress over time, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Governors do not evaluate the impact that the actions of senior and middle leaders are having on pupils' outcomes across the school. In particular, governors do not have enough knowledge to be able to confidently talk about or challenge the effectiveness of these actions. This is as a result of a lack of direct monitoring of pupils' progress, the impact of teaching on pupils' progress, the use of assessment information and the impact of the PE and sport funding.
- Governors who oversee the progress of disadvantaged pupils are limited in their evaluation of the impact of the school's actions because the written plans which are used to support this evaluation are not sufficiently detailed.
- Governors understand how to recruit staff safely. Governors with responsibility for safeguarding have received the necessary training to ensure that pupils are safe.
- Governors ensure that the school's performance management systems are strong and that pay awards are appropriately reviewed.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, including the newly appointed executive headteacher, have created a culture of safeguarding within the school. This culture ensures that staff are fully aware of the latest national guidance and have benefited from recent training in areas such as how

to deal with radicalisation and extremism.

- As a result of this training, staff are confident about the actions to take should they have any concerns about a pupil. Although governors are aware of the importance of the need to protect pupils from all possible risks and have received necessary training, some records do not demonstrate well enough the impact of any monitoring of safeguarding practices and procedures.
- Staff have a good understanding of how to listen and respond to pupils. They show a keen awareness of how to look after pupils and have their trust. High levels of care and support can be seen from the work of all staff, particularly from the school's special educational needs coordinator and the newly appointed family link and pastoral support worker.
- Pupils and parents say the school is a safe, secure and happy place.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and use of assessment by teachers to ensure that pupils learn effectively are not consistently good. There are some year groups or classes where there are clear strengths in teaching. However, too much variability hinders pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers do not consistently make best use of the information they have, or what they know about the pupils. Pupils are not challenged quickly enough and time is not always used productively. Pupils who are most able do not have immediate opportunities to tackle the more challenging tasks, particularly those which develop their reasoning skills in mathematics. This slows their learning.
- Teachers do not consistently make the best use of questions to skilfully challenge pupils to understand new concepts. Where teaching is at its best, teachers use a range of questions which encourage pupils to think deeply so that they have a better understanding of what is being taught. This enables them to make accelerated progress. However, in some classes, pupils often do not have enough time to think about the questions that they have been asked. This prevents them from having a better understanding of what they are learning.
- Pupils' books show teachers' expectations of pupils are not high enough. In some classes, the most able pupils are challenged to produce work which matches their capabilities in their written work, making effective use of challenging vocabulary and grammatical devices. However, this is not always replicated in subjects such as mathematics and science and this slows the progress that pupils are able to make. There is also a lack of challenge in presentation, particularly in mathematics and in the work of boys.
- Teachers do not ensure that pupils are able to consistently use strategies to help them with their reading. Some pupils are able to predict what might happen in a text and can use a range of strategies to help when reading more challenging words. However, other pupils, especially boys, are not always encouraged to use their reading skills. This is because teachers focus too heavily on comprehension and do not encourage pupils to read for pleasure.
- The well-deployed teaching assistants effectively support pupils in their learning. This is

particularly the case for pupils who have additional needs. Working alongside senior staff, teaching assistants are able to use assessment to enable pupils to make progress.

- Teachers are now benefiting from observing experienced staff across the trust and sharing best practice. The regular and focused meetings about the progress their pupils are making are also helping them to develop their teaching skills.
- Increased monitoring, training and guidance, introduced at the start of the year by senior and middle leaders, are also having a positive impact on improving the quality and consistency of teaching across the school.
- Following changes to the way the school curriculum is designed, teachers are beginning to make stronger links across the curriculum. For example, in Year 6 history, pupils used their writing skills to create an interview with Henry VIII. As a consequence, pupils were able to transfer their skills and find enjoyment in the breadth of learning.
- Pupils confidently respond to the feedback that their teachers give them. There is evidence of good progress, particularly in writing. Pupils are able to show adults what they know through their own responses and can confidently explain what they need to do next. This improves the quality of their work.
- Pupils' attitudes towards their learning are positive. This is particularly the case in writing in classes at the end of key stage 2. Pupils enjoy their learning and like their lessons. Because of this, progress in some year groups is accelerated and the quality of work in pupils' books has improved.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- All pupils are confident and self-assured. They are able to carry out roles of special responsibility in school, such as the school council, and peer mediators. Pupils take these roles seriously and are actively involved in the development of the school. For example, pupils have contributed to the changes made to the way playtime is organised. They have also been involved in keeping the school clean and led assemblies.
- Pupils are well supported to feel happy and safe. One pupil explained that, 'Our teachers always listen to us. We can approach anyone all the time if we have a problem.'
- Pupils show a good understanding of bullying, including cyber bullying. Pupils said that if bullying occurred, the school would react swiftly to it. Pupils have confidence in staff who deal quickly and decisively with disputes should they occur. Pupils benefit from the relationships that exist between themselves and adults in the school.
- Pupils show respect, kindness and tolerance towards one another. Pupils are proud of their school and are keen to make positive contributions to the school and the local community.

- Occasionally, pupils sometimes become distracted and lose focus in parts of lessons, especially when the work is not well matched to their needs. At these times, their progress slows and their interest wanes.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Most pupils take pride in their work and show positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are not afraid to make mistakes and see this as a valuable part of learning. During a discussion with pupils, one commented that, 'Once you're stuck, you are in the learning pit. This helps us to be more resilient.'
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school. High expectations from staff have a positive impact on the way that pupils behave, particularly when moving around the school. Pupils are considerate and well mannered. During the inspection, several pupils were observed being courteous and greeting adults in a warm and considerate way.
- The school has effective systems in place to support and deal with incidents of poor behaviour. The school is active in following up any incidents or concerns, particularly through the work of the recently appointed family link and pastoral worker. As a result of this, parents and external support are able to have a direct and immediate positive impact on improving behaviour.
- Leaders have worked hard to engage families and improve rates of attendance, particularly for girls. The strategies used by the school have been effective and attendance for the majority of pupils is in line with national levels. However, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is lower than the national figure. Increased monitoring and recent appointments show that leaders are aware of this and that they are already taking action to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils.
- Teachers do not consistently challenge pupils about the quality and care seen in some books. As a result, there are times when some pupils do not take enough pride in the presentation of their work, for example in mathematics. This reduces the overall quality, impression and standard of work being presented.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes over the last two years at the end of key stage 2 show a decline in the progress that pupils make in both reading and mathematics, in particular for middle-attaining pupils. Outcomes at the end of key stage 2 also show that the most able pupils are not always challenged to achieve the high score in both reading and mathematics.
- Pupils from high starting points do not use and apply their existing knowledge in mathematics, especially when asked to show their reasoning skills, quickly enough. As a result, this slows their progress.
- Outcomes over the last two years for disadvantaged pupils at the end of key stage 2 show a decline in both reading and mathematics. This decline was most noticeable in mathematics, with disadvantaged pupils being significantly below the national figures.

- The progress and attainment of current disadvantaged pupils, although improving, is not consistent across all year groups. Some pupils, where teaching is at its best, are making accelerated progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, some disadvantaged pupils are not developing the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills. Consequently, they do not make the progress that is needed, particularly in reading.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not make consistently good progress across the school. Leaders have recognised that assessment information is not as well used as it could be to record the smaller steps of progress that these pupils are making. Leaders are now making better use of renewed strategies to record smaller steps of progress and, because of this, pupils' progress is improving.
- Pupils' books show that there are some inconsistencies in outcomes across the curriculum. For example, writing across the school shows improvement. This follows the introduction of a new approach to pupils responding to the feedback from their teacher. Yet, writing in subjects other than English, such as science, often shows a reduction in the quality of work. Staff do not make the most of opportunities planned for pupils to apply the skills they have developed in reading, writing and mathematics across the curriculum and this limits the progress that pupils are able to make.
- Pupils enjoy reading, with some showing the necessary fluency and comprehension appropriate for their age. However, disadvantaged pupils and those whose attainment is lower do not make full use of a range of reading strategies. This is particularly the case for boys. This impacts on their love of reading and slows the progress that they are able to make.
- Current assessment information shows that low rates of progress for the middle prior attainment group and the most able pupils from 2016/17 in reading, writing and mathematics are being addressed and that pupils are making better progress currently. Inspectors noted a general improvement in pupils' English books since September 2017, following the recent introduction of a new approach to marking and assessment.
- Pupils entering the school, some with lower starting points than pupils nationally, come predominantly from the feeder infant school. Current assessment information and work in pupils' books shows that the majority of pupils settle well and make good progress in Year 3 in reading, writing and mathematics.

School details

Unique reference number	141351
Local authority	Bristol City of
Inspection number	10042645

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	294
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Andrew Bowden
Executive headteacher	Tracy French
Head of school	Matthew Morgan
Telephone number	0117 903 0480
Website	www.wickleaacademy.com
Email address	info@wickleaacademy.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about how the pupil premium allocation is to be spent and how the school will measure its impact. Nor does it comply with the guidance about how the school's current allocation for the additional physical education and sport premium funding is intended to be spent. It does not provide details on the business and financial interests of each governor.
- Wicklea Academy is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils known to be supported by the pupil premium is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national

average.

- The school meets the government's current floor targets, which set minimum expectations for progress and attainment.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in each class. Several of these observations were carried out with the executive headteacher of the multi-academy trust and headteacher of the school.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of pupils' workbooks throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, the headteacher of the school, subject leaders, the leader for special educational needs, six governors (including the chair of the multi-academy trust) and the chair and vice-chair of the academy trust.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally in class, at break and at lunchtimes, to seek their views about the school. Inspectors also attended the breakfast club.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils more formally to discuss many aspects of school life.
- An inspector listened to a range of pupils read.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's website and a range of school documents including assessment information, minutes from governors' meetings, the school's own evaluation and safeguarding records.
- Inspectors considered the 60 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, including free-text comments. They also spoke to a range of parents before school at the beginning of the inspection.
- Inspectors considered the 29 responses to the online staff survey.
- There were no questionnaires completed by children from the school.

Inspection team

Ben Jordan, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Foulkes	Ofsted Inspector
Jane Johns	Ofsted Inspector

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