

Waverley School

Yardley Green Road, Bordesley Green, Birmingham, West Midlands B9 5QA

Inspection dates

28–29 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Two headteachers arrived and left in quick succession in recent years. Consequently, leadership has been inconsistent. As a result, the quality of teaching dipped. Pupils' behaviour in the secondary phase declined sharply.
- There are weaknesses in secondary pupils' behaviour. The conduct of some of these pupils away from lessons is a particular concern. However, incidents of poor behaviour are decreasing. The school places strong emphasis on teaching values. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
- Some lessons in key stages 3 and 4 are disrupted by pupils' poorer behaviour, particularly in classes taught by teachers new to the school. This hinders learning for everyone.
- Some secondary pupils do not believe their opinions are valued sufficiently, or that their concerns will be treated sensitively enough.
- Leaders have not systematically evaluated the impact of some aspects of the school's work, particularly in relation to pupils' behaviour.

The school has the following strengths

- Senior leadership is, once again, stable. It is increasingly effective. As a result, the quality of teaching has recovered and pupils' outcomes are good and improving further.
- The skilled executive headteacher has resumed operational leadership of the school. He is building a senior team which is capable of moving the school forward rapidly.
- Pupils behave well in all phases of the school, apart from a minority in key stages 3 and 4.
- Teaching is effective. It is particularly strong in the early years, primary phase and sixth form.
- Children get off to an exceptional start in early years. They settle very well into school life and make strong progress due to the effective teaching in this well-led provision.
- The sixth form is effective. Almost all students achieve the qualifications they need to go on to their chosen higher education courses.
- There is strict accountability between governors, trustees and the executive headteacher.
- The school ensures that pupils are resilient to the dangers of extremism and radicalisation.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by making sure that all pupils in the secondary phase:
 - feel confident that they can talk to staff about their concerns, and that issues will be handled sensitively
 - believe that their views are heard and taken into account by staff
 - move around the school in a calm and orderly way
 - speak to one another and to adults respectfully
 - do not use derogatory language to one another
 - do not disrupt lessons by their wilful misbehaviour.
- Improve the impact of leaders and managers by ensuring that:
 - the behaviour of secondary pupils is of the same high quality as that demonstrated by pupils in all other phases
 - new teachers, trainees and supply staff are well supported in managing pupils' behaviour in lessons
 - leaders systematically check what difference their actions are making to pupils, including to their behaviour.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Until recently, leaders failed to tackle a decline in pupils' behaviour in key stages 3 and 4. Staff were not given clear guidelines on using the school's rewards and sanctions. Nor were they held to account consistently for managing their pupils' behaviour.
- Systems, and lines of accountability for behaviour, are now much clearer. Serious incidents are reducing quickly, but the behaviour of some secondary pupils is not good enough and some staff do not feel well enough supported to manage this.
- In recent years, much instability and inconsistency were caused by a quick succession of headteachers in the secondary phase. The impact of this was described perfectly by a pupil: 'A headteacher comes, imposes rules, then the next one comes and changes the rules.' As a result of this upheaval, leaders did not maintain sufficient oversight of pupils' behaviour. It is also the reason why the quality of teaching dipped.
- Stability has now been restored. The executive headteacher, the local governing body and trustees of the Waverley Education Foundation (the trust) form a strong strategic team. They have, largely, overturned the weaknesses caused by the turbulence in staffing. Although pupils' behaviour in the secondary phase has not improved enough, dips in their outcomes have recovered. The quality of teaching is, again, strong overall. Relative weaknesses in the secondary phase are being tackled.
- The school's motto, 'Learning through Diversity', aims to embrace the diversity of the local area and promote understanding, tolerance and respect. Leaders know that widely differing views, values and beliefs about what is right and wrong permeate the local community. They are deeply committed to building cohesion within the school and in wider society.
- The school's success in opening up dialogue about these tensions is demonstrated by its status as a Stonewall champion. Pupils are confident to discuss issues around sexuality maturely and with interest. Similarly, leaders work positively to ensure that pupils are respectful of other people's cultures and beliefs. In this way, leaders help protect pupils from the dangers of extremism and radicalisation. The school is less successful at challenging other perceptions. For example, some pupils casually use derogatory language to one another without consideration of the hurt it may cause.
- Leaders have created a curriculum that enables pupils to fulfil their future roles in the local community and beyond. For example, the range of post-16 courses on offer has been adapted to enable students to train for the type of careers they might pursue at the neighbouring hospital. Similarly, the strong focus on speaking and writing in early years helps those children who need to acquire English to do so quickly.
- The curriculum is broad ranging and interesting. A well-structured programme of educational visits supplements in-school lessons. These add to pupils' cultural experiences. Some secondary-aged pupils do not value these trips for the benefits they bring. Instead, they complain that they do not visit 'fun' venues, such as theme parks. Leaders are trying hard to overcome this misconceived, negative view.
- Following numerous changes, a full team of subject leaders and other middle leaders is now in place. They have been well trained by senior staff and are beginning to work

together well as a team. As a result, middle leaders are starting to hold staff more closely to account and are, in return, becoming more accountable for the impact of their own work. This is why outcomes have recovered and behaviour is getting better.

- The primary-phase senior team has maintained high-quality teaching since the school opened as an academy and brought about further improvements where needed.
- The secondary head of school accurately identifies weaknesses in teachers' practice and ensures that there is relevant training and support. She holds teachers closely to account for pupils' performance. As a result, the quality of teaching is strong in many subjects and classes. Relative weaknesses are being addressed. However, the quality of teaching is being hampered by some pupils' poor behaviour in lessons.
- The trust ensures that additional funding received to support the achievement of particular pupils is used effectively. Disadvantaged pupils achieve well as a result of the use of the pupil premium. Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are well supported. Primary-aged pupils are more active and are gaining better skills in a range of sports due to effective use of the physical education and sport premium. Senior leaders in each phase do not have direct responsibility for how the money is spent, but make sure that outcomes are good for the pupils for whom it is intended.

Governance of the school

- Governance is strong and effective. The board of trustees, local governing body and executive headteacher operate with clear responsibilities and lines of accountability. They have successfully re-established stable leadership throughout the school following the turbulence of recent years.
- The board of trustees has a clear view of the strategic direction of the school. It holds the local governing body to account for the quality of education provided by the school. The board of trustees seeks and takes good account of external views.
- The local governing body holds senior leaders to account and makes its expectations for pupils' outcomes clear. It contributes well to strategic decisions, in consultation with the board of trustees.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Policies and systems enable staff to identify, record and act upon concerns quickly and thoroughly to protect pupils.
- The school's strong stance on celebrating diversity is helping pupils understand the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. As a result, leaders are making sure that they keep pupils safe from these dangers.
- Some pupils say that they are reluctant to report concerns about bullying to staff, preferring to sort things out for themselves. Procedures for safeguarding could be strengthened by making sure that pupils feel fully supported.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers are knowledgeable and skilled in the subjects and ages they teach. They know what pupils should learn in order to reach or exceed the expected standards for their ages. Teachers use this knowledge to build pupils' skills and understanding systematically.
- Teachers use thoughtful questioning to probe pupils' understanding and to challenge them to think more deeply. This was observed on a number of occasions. For example, in a science lesson in Year 4, the teacher's questions helped pupils explain the water cycle. Similarly, in a citizenship lesson in Year 10, the teacher used questions skilfully to introduce new knowledge and information about environmental issues. This quality of questioning helps pupils develop secure understanding and skills.
- The school has a policy which requires teachers to assess frequently how well pupils are learning and to give precise feedback to help them make improvements. Teachers, on the whole, follow this policy well. This helps pupils evaluate their success. For example, in a Year 10 art lesson, pupils were able to identify strengths and weaknesses in their own work with great accuracy and detail.
- Primary phase teachers work well in teams. They plan work together carefully across all classes in a year group. This ensures that pupils get an equally good experience and make good progress in all classes.
- Pupils are taught well in the SEN resource base. They are effectively supported when they join their peers in mainstream classes. As a result, they learn well.
- Teachers explain clearly to pupils what the lesson is about. Most ensure that pupils stay focused on the intended learning throughout. Teachers do this by spotting whether pupils are finding the work too hard or too easy. They then provide additional support or inject extra challenge as necessary to ensure that pupils achieve well.
- In the early years, primary and post-16 phases, relationships between pupils and staff are respectful, friendly and trusting. This means that pupils enjoy the challenge of learning and apply themselves well to their work. This is also true in most classes in the secondary phase. A lovely example was seen in Year 11, where pupils were hanging onto the teacher's every word in an English lesson. Their enthusiasm for what they were learning was palpable.
- Some teachers in the secondary phase are less skilled at managing pupils' behaviour than other teachers in the school. In this small number of lessons, pupils do not apply themselves to their work and do not learn well.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement because there are weaknesses in the secondary phase. In all other parts of the school, this aspect of the school's work is effective.
- Pupils in key stage 4 say that they do not always feel comfortable to speak to staff

about bullying. They say that there have been occasions where such situations have not been handled sensitively. Pupils say that 'snitching' to a person in authority is seen as a serious misdemeanour in the local community. Some cited occasions when telling teachers about concerns led to reprisals outside school.

- There are examples of when secondary-aged pupils have used derogatory language about race or colour towards each other. Pupils say that they do not feel that these incidents are malicious, and that there is not a culture of racism in the school. Rather, they describe it as 'banter'. Leaders, however, are not prepared to accept this and are robustly challenging these attitudes.
- The school places great emphasis on giving pupils the attitudes and skills they will need to be successful members of modern British society. The school actively promotes celebration of diversity. All pupils are taught to have respect for all people, regardless of background, belief or lifestyle. Most pupils demonstrate a deep sense of respect through their actions. However, there are pupils in the secondary phase who do not, because they do not behave well for their teachers and use derogatory language to their peers.
- Pupils in the secondary phase do not feel well listened to. They feel that there is a lack of respect for their views. There is a school council, but meetings are infrequent. Its members are frustrated that they cannot represent their peers as well as they would wish.
- Pupils in all other phases of the school are happy, confident, enthusiastic learners. They are well supported by staff when concerns arise. Bullying is rare in the primary phase. Pupils in all phases are taught well about the dangers of online activity.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Stark contrast exists between the poor behaviour of a small minority of secondary-aged pupils and the good behaviour of other pupils in the school.
- Staff and pupils say that behaviour is improving. The school's records confirm this. However, there is still work to be done. During the inspection, inspectors witnessed behaviour by some pupils that was unacceptable.
- On the first day of the inspection, the atmosphere in corridors, stairways and outside areas was very unruly. Staff were taken aback by this.
- Behaviour on the second day was notably better. All staff and most pupils spoken to told inspectors that the experience of the previous day was not typical. This was confirmed in the school's records. Pupils said that a group of older boys had instructed them to behave badly for the inspection. The reasons for the alleged campaign are unknown. However, it was clear that some pupils were unconcerned that their behaviour might cause inspectors to view the school unfavourably.
- In a small number of lessons in key stages 3 and 4, learning is hindered because of some pupils who talk over the teacher and who do not respond to reasonable requests. Pupils say that behaviour is worst in lessons where the teacher is new, or a trainee, or temporary. In other lessons, the same pupils behave well.
- Other pupils in the school behave very well. For example, children in early years learn

quickly to follow instructions and to get on well together. Similarly, primary-stage pupils listen to the teacher, work hard and play sensibly at breaktimes. Students in the sixth form are developing good work-related habits ready for their higher education courses or future employment.

- Pupils' attendance is in line with national figures. Some families take their children out of school for extended holidays to visit family abroad. The school, rightly, takes a firm line on this. The number of pupils who have high rates of absence has reduced as a result.
- Similarly, a strong stance on punctuality has reduced lateness. Some older pupils are not happy about this. They say that the use of detention for being a few minutes late is disproportionate. However, others said that this approach had worked. They are now sure to arrive at school on time so as to avoid detention.
- Pupils behave well in the SEN resource base. Similarly, the small number of pupils who attend off-site alternative provision are well supervised and behave well.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- By the time they complete Year 11, pupils' attainment is at least in line with, and in some cases above that of other pupils nationally. This demonstrates that pupils make sustained strong progress across all key stages from relatively low starting points.
- Slower progress in recent years was caused by dips in the quality of teaching. Well-considered actions quickly remedied this. Public examination results in 2017 showed that Year 11 pupils had made progress broadly in line with that of other pupils nationally. They made particularly strong progress in the English Baccalaureate subjects.
- Overall, disadvantaged pupils made similar progress to that of other pupils nationally. However, in mathematics, their progress was weaker across key stages 3 and 4. Leaders have taken a range of actions to make sure that current disadvantaged pupils make better progress in mathematics. There are early signs that the plan is being successful, but it is too early to see the full impact.
- At key stages 3 and 4, the majority of pupils make sound progress towards their targets across most subjects. However, progress for the most able pupils in key stage 3 is not as strong as for other ability groups. Leaders are focusing efforts on speeding up progress for these pupils. The school's assessment information shows that leaders' plans are having a positive impact.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are well supported in the SEN resource base and in mainstream classes. As a result, they make strong progress in a wide range of subjects.
- There are no discernible differences in the attainment and progress between pupils from different ethnic groups. In addition, those who speak English as an additional language are well supported, and so achieve well.
- National assessments in key stage 1 reflect the dip in the quality of teaching in 2015. Year 2 pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average. However, recovery has been swift. In 2017, overall standards were in line

with those nationally. More pupils demonstrated a greater depth of understanding than is shown in the national figure.

- Similar improvement is seen in the scores in the phonics screening check for Year 1 pupils. This is because the quality of phonics teaching has improved.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Many children enter the Reception classes with skills that are considerably weaker than those of typical four-year-olds. In particular, many children find it difficult to communicate effectively. In addition, some do not speak English at home.
- The high-quality teaching children receive means that they are ready for the demands of the national curriculum by the time they begin Year 1. By the time they finish Reception Year, most have reached the necessary good level of development. This shows that they make impressive progress in early years.
- Children settle quickly into school life and learn to behave appropriately because adults create clear routines for them to follow. Children soon learn what to do and follow instructions willingly.
- Teachers work in close partnership with parents to establish what children can and cannot do when they start school. Frequent, detailed assessment is used effectively to build a picture of children's growing skills. Teachers use this information carefully to plan activities and experiences that systematically build children's understanding.
- Disadvantaged children achieve well. The early years pupil premium is used well to boost their personal, social and emotional skills. This gives them the confidence they need to learn.
- Children are safe, happy and well cared for in the early years classes. All safeguarding and welfare requirements are met. They feel secure in the trusting relationships they make with the adults around them. This helps them take risks and learn new skills quickly.
- The early years provision is highly effective because it is led exceptionally well. The leader has an incisive knowledge of what is working well and what could be even better. She is ambitious and driven in her pursuit of excellence.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Leadership in the sixth form is strong and effective. Leaders have a sound grasp of students' achievements, the strengths in the sixth form, and areas that need development. Action planning shows that leaders deal with weaknesses swiftly.
- Students in the sixth form make good progress. Across a range of subjects, their progress is in line with that of other pupils nationally with similar starting points. In some subjects, in the past, students have made weaker progress. Leaders have identified these areas and implemented effective actions to improve current students' attainment and progress.
- The post-16 curriculum is well considered and meets students' needs effectively. The range of non-qualification activities is impressive and effectively prepares students for

life in modern Britain. Each of these is carefully chosen to build students' confidence, work readiness, financial knowledge, health and well-being. All students engage in regular sporting activities and have access to an array of support for their studies and personal needs.

- In response to students' needs and local employment needs, leaders have introduced new vocational courses. This means that students have a wider range of options to choose from. These courses have been popular with students.
- Teaching in the sixth form is effective. Teachers and students engage in thoughtful dialogue in lessons. Students become highly motivated, reflective and independent learners.
- As a result of leaders making sure that courses are suitable for students, retention in the sixth form is very high. The very small number of students who do not complete their courses are supported to take other, more suitable courses in the sixth form. The very small number of students who need to retake GCSEs in English and mathematics do so successfully.
- The majority of students go on to higher education after their time in the sixth form. All students in 2017 went on to education, apprenticeships or employment. This is because leaders provide effective advice and information about the range of opportunities available to them. Leaders track destinations carefully. The tracking shows that the proportion of students who sustain their destinations is above the national average.

School details

Unique reference number	142219
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10043598

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	All-through
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,480
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	79
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mr Giora Berman
Executive Headteacher	Kamal Hanif OBE
Telephone number	0121 566 6600
Website	www.waverley.bham.sch.uk
Email address	enquiry@waverley.bham.sch.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 Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- This was the first inspection carried out since the school opened as an academy on 1 August 2015. The predecessor school (Waverley School) was last inspected in December 2012, when it was judged to be outstanding.
- The school is part of the Waverley Education Foundation multi-academy trust, along

with the Waverley Studio College. The trust is governed by a board of trustees. Oversight of the school's management is carried out by a local governing body.

- After the school opened as an academy, the leadership structure was changed to include the post of headteacher. Following a period of turbulence and difficulty in recruiting an effective headteacher, the executive headteacher has assumed operational responsibility for the school.
- Around two thirds of pupils come from Asian or Asian British Pakistani heritage. Of the remaining third, the majority are from Asian, Asian British Bangladeshi, Black or Black British African groups.
- The school operates a specially resourced provision for 30 secondary-aged pupils who have cognitive and learning difficulties. Pupils work both within the resource base and in mainstream classes.
- The school also houses a satellite unit for Calthorpe Academy, a local special school. Secondary-aged pupils from Calthorpe attend to access mainstream courses.
- The school makes use of three alternative providers of education for pupils who are at risk of permanent exclusion: EBN Academy, CUL Academy and Riverside.
- The school provides initial teacher training through the Waverley Teaching School Alliance.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons in all phases of the school. Some of these visits were made jointly with senior staff. During lessons, inspectors observed pupils learning, spoke with them and looked at the work in their books.
- Discussions were held with: the executive headteacher; senior leaders in each phase; other school staff; the chairs of the board of trustees and the local governing body; groups of pupils in Years 10 and 11; and several parents as they brought their children to school. Informal conversations were held with other pupils as they moved around the school and played at lunchtime. Letters written to inspectors by four pupils were also considered.
- A range of documents was examined, including: leaders' checks on how well the school is doing and their plans for improvement; minutes of trust and local governing body meetings; information about the curriculum; information about the progress and attainment of pupils; and documents relating to pupils' attendance, behaviour and welfare.
- There were no responses to the online survey, Parent View.
- This inspection was carried out following a number of complaints made to Ofsted that raised serious concerns. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector decided that an inspection of the school should take place to follow up the whole-school issues that were raised. Inspectors sought to establish whether leadership of the school was secure, whether pupils' behaviour is managed effectively and the extent to which the school promotes pupils' personal development and welfare.

Inspection team

Sandy Hayes, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Alan Johnson	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Ellis-Martin	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Appleby	Ofsted Inspector
Dan Owen	Her Majesty's Inspector
James McNeillie	Senior Her Majesty's 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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