

Wrenn School

London Road, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire NN8 2DQ

Inspection dates

9–10 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has brought about considerable improvements to all aspects of the school since the last inspection.
- Leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. They take swift and effective action to tackle areas needing improvement.
- Leaders, governors and staff are committed to ensuring continued and sustained improvements to the school. They are strategic, reflective and determined.
- The academy advisory board (AAB) provides effective support and challenge. Members are knowledgeable and hold leaders to account.
- Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make good progress in a range of subjects. Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are supported well and make good progress.
- Pupils' personal development and well-being are promoted in all aspects of the school's work. Pupils feel valued and extremely well supported.
- The headteacher has implemented a clear strategy for developing leadership at all levels in the school.
- Leaders have amended the curriculum to make sure it meets pupils' differing needs and interests.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite, confident and courteous.
- The sixth form is a strength of the school. Teaching is good. Students are very well supported to achieve.
- Teaching is very strong in some subject areas, particularly where teachers plan activities to meet the differing needs of groups of pupils.
- There are pockets of weaker teaching where teachers do not consistently provide pupils with challenging work. Leaders tackle weaker practice effectively and teaching is improving.
- Whole-school attendance is improving, but remains slightly below the national average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent is too high.
- Pastoral care is strong. External agencies are used effectively. However, the proportion of permanent exclusions is likely to be above the national average by the end of this year.
- The Education Fellowship Trust (TEFT) has not provided effective support or challenge. The board of trustees has not held leaders to account.

Full report

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that all teachers:
 - plan activities that interest, enthuse and meet the needs of all groups of pupils, including the least able
 - consistently provide challenging activities.
- Improve the strategies to reduce the risk of exclusion so that fewer pupils are permanently excluded from school.
- Improve overall rates of attendance and reduce the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent from school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the headteacher took up his post in 2015, the school has improved considerably. Improvements have accelerated since the last inspection. The headteacher is passionate about the school and determined to bring about further improvements. He is ably supported by an effective leadership team that shares his vision and ambition.
- Leaders have a detailed and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas in need of further development. Following the last inspection, they took swift and effective action to tackle the areas identified as needing improvement.
- Leaders are strategic in their approach to school improvement. Action plans are clear and specific, and focus on the school's priorities. Leaders evaluate the impact of their work regularly and amend their plans accordingly.
- Staff share leaders' aspirations for pupils' success. They understand the school's priorities and work in collaboration with each other, staff, pupils and parents and carers. Pupils' interests are at the heart of all that the school does.
- The leadership of teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection. Leaders have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching across the school. Good practice is identified and shared. Weak practice is challenged through a structured programme of continuing professional development.
- The headteacher is keen for staff to take on more responsibility. Leaders have devised a carefully tailored programme for staff training and development. Staff value the opportunities they receive to develop their skills and practice. Training and development activities are linked to staff appraisal.
- The leadership of the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is good. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) monitors pupils' attendance and progress and liaises with other leaders and staff to ensure that the correct support is in place. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress.
- Middle leaders are developed through regular secondments to the senior leadership team. They work on specific aspects of school improvement, closely aligned to the school's priorities. This provides effective professional development while bringing about necessary improvements.
- Leaders account for the use of additional funding carefully. They evaluate the impact of the funding and report regularly to the AAB. The pupil premium funding, the Year 7 catch-up funding and funding to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities have a demonstrable and positive impact on pupils' progress.
- Leaders continually review the curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of changing cohorts. Recent amendments to the curriculum have been successful in increasing pupils' rates of progress. An extensive extra-curricular programme provides opportunities for pupils to extend their experiences. Pupils are encouraged and expected to take up these opportunities.
- The curriculum prepares pupils positively for life in modern Britain. For example, pupils spoke confidently about the development of life skills through activities in a physical

education (PE) lesson. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well throughout the school. Key themes and British values are explored through the tutor programme and assemblies. For example, inspectors observed an assembly promoting tolerance and understanding. Younger pupils were observed discussing current issues during a tutor session where they demonstrated empathy when discussing a terminally ill child.

- Leaders monitor pupils' behaviour and attendance closely. They use this information to intervene quickly to ensure that pupils remain on track towards achieving their progress targets.
- TEFT has not provided effective support or challenge. The considerable improvements in all areas of the school are the result of the hard work and dedication of leaders and staff in the school.

Governance of the school

- Governance is provided by TEFT and the AAB, whose role is advisory. TEFT has not provided effective governance. It has not held leaders to account.
- Members of the AAB are knowledgeable and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They meet regularly and maintain an up-to-date understanding of issues that are pertinent to the school.
- The AAB has filled the gap in governance left by TEFT. It has provided effective support and challenge to leaders. For example, the chair of the AAB invites leaders to present to the AAB about aspects of their work and its impact on school improvement.
- The AAB shares leaders' passion and aspiration for school improvement. Members have the skills, knowledge and understanding to hold leaders to account and do so effectively.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The designated safeguarding leader has an extensive team of well-trained staff. Pastoral staff liaise closely with leaders, which ensures that all maintain an up-to-date knowledge and understanding of safeguarding cases in the school.
- All staff receive regular training. They are knowledgeable about national and local safeguarding issues and are alert to potential risks.
- Staff prioritise pupils' well-being and safety. Positive relationships between staff and pupils underpin safeguarding arrangements.
- There are clear processes and procedures to record and monitor safeguarding concerns. Records are detailed and of high quality. They are closely monitored by the designated safeguarding leader, who ensures that all actions are timely and effective.
- Leaders involve external agencies when required. Referrals are timely and tenaciously followed up. This means that pupils get the help they need quickly.
- Leaders have taken the correct course of action to mitigate the potential risks of operating on a split site. A clear and robust risk assessment is in place.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Relationships between staff and pupils are extremely positive. Pupils feel supported in all aspects of their learning. Teachers are enthusiastic and passionate about their subjects. Teachers encourage pupils and develop their confidence. Teachers plan and teach lessons that actively involve pupils in interesting tasks and activities. Pupils appreciate and enjoy this approach. Very effective use is made of discussion and pupils are encouraged to participate. They are not afraid to make and learn from mistakes.
- Teachers use questioning skilfully to correct misconceptions and to extend pupils' understanding. They target questions towards pupils of differing abilities and use follow-up questions effectively to probe and deepen pupils' thinking.
- Considerable work has been undertaken to increase the level of challenge for the most able pupils. The majority of teachers plan activities that meet the needs of all learners, stretching the most able and supporting those who require additional help and encouragement.
- The new system of target setting, based on pupils' prior attainment, has raised teachers' expectations and pupils' aspirations. Pupils understand what is meant by their MEG (minimum expected grade) and aspire to achieve their TAG (targeted aspirational grade).
- Teachers consistently apply the school's feedback policy. Pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work.
- Leaders have introduced a new approach to homework. Teachers set 'prep' activities that are designed to prepare pupils for future learning. Pupils say that they like this approach. Leaders do not yet evaluate the quality of homework activities consistently or the impact it has on pupils' learning.
- There are some inconsistencies in a small proportion of teaching. In these cases, teachers do not plan activities that match learners' needs. Sometimes, teachers do not plan activities to interest and enthuse the least able pupils. Equally, the most able pupils are not always moved on to more challenging activities. This means that some pupils are not effectively supported or sufficiently challenged.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils feel very well supported. As one pupil reported to inspectors, 'The staff are amazing — they help you if you need extra support.'
- Leaders and staff encourage pupils to extend their experiences. For example, a large proportion of Year 11 pupils have been encouraged to participate in the national citizenship scheme this summer.
- Pupils are proud to be members of the school. They encapsulate the school's ethos, 'proud to be Wrenn', in their attitude and approach to school life. Pupils are confident and polite. Many pupils were keen to speak to inspectors, to share their views and to

extol the school's virtues.

- Pupils' physical and emotional well-being are nurtured. For example, pupils are encouraged to maintain a healthy lifestyle and help is provided for those who have mental health needs.
- The curriculum helps pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. For example, they learn about how to protect themselves from the potential dangers of radicalisation, gangs, the internet and child sexual exploitation.
- Pupils understand what constitutes bullying. They recognise that such behaviour is unacceptable and that assistance is available for those who may need it in the form of anti-bullying ambassadors and pastoral staff. Pupils say that bullying is rare, but they are confident that staff would deal with it effectively and swiftly if it were to occur.
- A close eye is kept on the small number of pupils who attend alternative, off-site provision. Leaders liaise closely with providers to monitor their behaviour, attendance and progress. Pupils' personal development and welfare are promoted through regular and frequent activities that are bespoke to pupils' needs.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils respond well to clearly communicated high expectations of behaviour and conduct. Pupils conduct themselves well around school and at unstructured times.
- Pupils' conduct and self-discipline are good in the vast majority of lessons. Where teaching is weaker, pupils lose concentration because their needs are not met effectively. However, this does not disrupt the learning of others.
- Leaders track and monitor pupils' behaviour carefully. They provide considerable help to pupils who struggle to manage their own behaviour. The proportion of fixed-term exclusions has declined and is now below the national average. However, the proportion of permanent exclusions is likely to be above the national average this year.
- Attendance, including for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, has improved. However, it remains slightly below the national average.
- The proportion of all pupils who are persistently absent from school has reduced and is now below the national average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent has also reduced, but it is still too high and is considerably above the national average for all pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils enter the school with attainment levels below the national average. They make good progress to catch up with other pupils nationally. In 2017, outcomes by the end of key stage 4 improved considerably and pupils made faster progress than that seen in previous years. Progress for all pupils was faster than the national average. Progress for disadvantaged pupils also increased and was similar to that made by other pupils nationally.
- Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, made particularly fast progress in languages in

2017.

- Lower attaining pupils do very well at the school. In 2017, this group of pupils made faster progress than the national average for pupils with similar starting points. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language, are very well taught and make good progress.
- Improvements to the quality of teaching, and the curriculum, are resulting in younger pupils making rapid progress. Pupils who enter the school with literacy and numeracy levels below those typical for their age make good progress to catch up with their peers.
- The most able pupils made slower progress than other pupils in the school and than this group did nationally in 2017. Leaders have taken effective action to improve outcomes for this group of pupils. Currently, these pupils are making much faster progress than previous cohorts.
- Progress in English and humanities, particularly in geography, was below that seen nationally in 2017. The quality of teaching in these subject areas has improved considerably and current pupils are making better progress. Pupils are making particularly fast progress in English because teachers plan activities that interest and challenge all pupils effectively.
- Pupils' attainment improved in 2017. Pupils' attainment in English and mathematics was broadly in line with national averages. However, the proportion of pupils achieving a grade 4 in both English and mathematics was below national averages for all pupils, and particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Similarly, the proportion of pupils achieving a grade 5 in both English and mathematics was also low compared with national attainment. Leaders' tracking indicates a significant improvement in these measures in 2018. Work in current pupils' books demonstrates faster progress and higher attainment than in previous years.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- The sixth form is a strength of the school. Leaders have taken effective action to improve aspects of the provision that were identified as weaknesses at the last inspection, such as the curriculum and the support to ensure that students are successful in completing their courses.
- Teaching is consistently good in the sixth form. Staff have good subject knowledge and use this to plan engaging activities that interest and motivate students. This is reflected in students' enthusiasm and positive work ethic.
- Discussion is used extremely well. It develops students' understanding and leads to good progress.
- Students benefit from impartial careers advice and guidance, which are tailored to individuals' needs. The school works with a range of external providers and ensures that students are accurately and well informed about the opportunities available to them.
- The proportion of students who progressed to higher education, employment or training has been consistently above the national average in recent years. All current

Year 13 students have offers of placements in higher education or apprenticeships.

- The school meets the requirements of the 16 to 19 study programmes. All students undertake work experience, linked to their interests and aspirations.
- Retention rates in the sixth form are consistently above the national average and continue to improve. All Year 12 students in 2017 have continued with their studies into Year 13.
- The small number of students who need to re-sit GCSE English and mathematics make good progress. The vast majority achieve a grade 5.
- Students' personal development and welfare are promoted extremely well. Students feel very well supported in all aspects of school life. They appreciate the additional assistance that staff provide to help them overcome challenges and difficulties. Students are confident and self-assured. They receive thoughtful guidance from their tutors and feel well prepared for life beyond the sixth form. Students particularly value the personal, social and health education curriculum that is delivered through the tutorial programme.
- Leaders review the curriculum to ensure that it meets learners' needs and interests. For example, they have recently introduced more vocational courses, including a qualification in public services.
- Students benefit from an extensive range of extra-curricular activities and development opportunities. For example, they act as mentors to younger students and participate in fund-raising activities for charities.
- Students make good progress in academic and vocational subjects. In 2017, outcomes improved and were broadly average. Leaders' tracking information indicates that current students are making faster progress than in the past and leaders expect outcomes to improve further in 2018. This view is supported by the high quality of work in students' books.

School details

Unique reference number	139961
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10048208

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 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,031
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	94
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Rachel Mallows
Principal	Steve Elliott
Telephone number	01933 222039
Website	www.wrenn-academy.net
Email address	info@wrenn-academy.net
Date of previous inspection	18–19 October 2016

Information about this school

- The school joined The Education Fellowship Trust (TEFT) in September 2013, when it converted to academy status. Since March 2017, the regional schools commissioner has been in the process of finding a new trust for the school to join. At the time of the inspection, this was not yet finalised and TEFT remains in place as the school's sponsor.
- The appropriate authority is the TEFT. In the absence of support, the AAB has assumed this role.
- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school. It is based on two sites: Years 7 and 8 and the sixth form are based on one site, and Years 9, 10 and 11 are

based on the other.

- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The school has pupils from 16 different ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is average.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is above average. The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities but who do not have an education, health and care plan is average.
- A very small number of pupils attend alternative, off-site provision at Progress School in Northampton.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 51 lessons, some jointly with senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, other staff, members of the academy advisory board and two representatives from The Education Fellowship Trust, including the chair of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in lessons and a sample of pupils' books.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons, at breaktime and at lunchtime. Inspectors also observed pupils' learning and behaviour in assemblies and tutorial periods. They visited the upper-school internal exclusion room.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils, from all year groups, in discussion groups and informally around the school. They also considered 24 responses to the pupil survey and a letter from a pupil.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, its improvement plans, minutes of meetings of the AAB, information about the attainment and progress of all pupils, records relating to behaviour and safeguarding, and information on the school's website. They evaluated the school's pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding strategies.
- Inspectors considered the 66 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and the 133 free-text responses from parents. They also considered an email communication from a parent. They considered 62 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Deborah Mosley, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Claire Shepherd	Ofsted Inspector
Laurence Reilly	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Heery	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2018