

De Warenne Academy

Gardens Lane, Conisbrough, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN12 3JY

Inspection dates

15–16 May 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Although improving, pupils' progress over time is weak in a number of subjects, including English, mathematics, science, geography and history.
- In recent years, disadvantaged pupils made considerably less progress than others nationally in many of their subjects, including English, mathematics and science. Currently, they make much stronger progress.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is variable across the school. In some lessons, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching lack precision.
- Plans to improve the school are not sharp enough. They lack detail and do not enable leaders to evaluate their work.
- A minority of pupils and parents have concerns regarding bullying and how it is resolved within the school.
- Work is not well matched to the needs of pupils from their different starting points. The most able pupils make weak progress because they are not challenged sufficiently.
- Some teachers do not consistently apply the school's assessment and behaviour policies.
- The number of pupils who are excluded for a fixed period is too high. Signs of improvement are visible. However, a small minority of pupils continue to display negative attitudes to their learning.
- Governors and members of the academy advisory board (AAB) do not hold leaders to account as well as they could. They do not have a detailed understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Some pupils have limited opportunities to explore topics linked to personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education.

The school has the following strengths

- The principal has a clear vision. She is resilient, astute and determined to do well for the pupils.
- Provision in the sixth form is good. Students make above average progress in a wide range of subjects.
- Attendance rates are much higher than they have been. This is contributing to improving rates of progress for current pupils.
- Some inspirational teaching exists in the school, including in French and construction.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency and quality of teaching, learning and assessment, especially in English, mathematics, science, geography and history, so that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make at least good progress, by ensuring that teachers:
 - use pupils' assessment information effectively to plan lessons that meet the needs of all pupils from their different starting points, including the most able
 - raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - plan learning activities that consolidate and deepen pupils' understanding
 - set meaningful homework for pupils.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that staff consistently apply school policies
 - refining school improvement plans, particularly the plan to accelerate the progress of disadvantaged pupils, to include detailed actions, measurable success criteria and robust evaluations
 - making sure those with responsibility for governance have a detailed understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school so that they can hold leaders to account
 - ensuring that the checks on teaching, learning and assessment focus on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress
 - clarifying the role of the AAB.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - ensuring that pupils are given sufficient opportunities to learn about PSHE education, particularly in key stage 4
 - further reducing the number of bullying incidents and raising the profile of the anti-bullying initiatives in school
 - improving the behaviour of a minority of pupils who continue to disrupt learning
 - further reducing the number of pupils who are excluded for a fixed period
 - continuing to improve pupils' attendance and decrease the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- This school is improving. Since her appointment in September 2016, the principal has managed to reverse a significant decline in the quality of education pupils receive. She is astute and has very high expectations of herself and others. The principal is uncompromising in her quest to improve the quality of education for every pupil in the school. She has overcome some considerable obstacles and managed to implement widespread change for the better. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is stronger than it was previously and pupils are making better progress as a result. However, although improving, leaders have not yet secured consistently good teaching or behaviour that leads to pupils making at least good progress in a wide range of subjects.
- Leaders' plans for improving the school accurately identify the key areas that need to improve. Nonetheless, plans lack precision and do not enable leaders to evaluate the most successful strategies or monitor the work of others. Consequently, some plans designed to accelerate improvements in the school are less successful than they could be.
- Leaders have not been able to ensure that all teachers consistently apply school policies, including the school's assessment and behaviour policy. As a result, some pupils do not receive the support that they need. Others are unsure of the boundaries or expectations of their behaviour from one lesson to the next.
- Currently, some teaching and leadership positions remain vacant. Leaders have appointed temporary or supply teachers in some areas. In addition, leaders of the multi-academy trust (the trust) have supported the school by providing experienced leaders to fill subject leadership posts until an appointment is made. Leaders have made some recent senior leadership appointments that will help deal with pressing issues, such as including improving the quality of teaching and supporting disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders, including governors, have sought to raise the profile of disadvantaged pupils in the school. They continue to reflect and act on the recent external review of pupil premium spending. In many respects, leaders' increased focus on disadvantaged pupils has been successful because disadvantaged pupils make more progress now than they did in the past. However, leaders do not use additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils as well as they could. This is because they do not identify the differing needs or barriers to learning of disadvantaged pupils when they join the school in Year 7. Furthermore, plans to spend additional funding do not aim to address pupils' barriers to their learning, nor do they make it clear who is leading on each action. Similarly, leaders do not evaluate the success of each strategy. Consequently, leaders are unsure if they are currently spending additional funding on strategies that have a successful impact on disadvantaged pupils' learning.
- Although a small number of leaders effectively monitor the quality of teaching, some leaders' checks on the quality of teaching often focus on what the teacher is doing rather than the effect of the teacher's actions on the progress pupils make. In some subjects, pupils are making less progress than they should be because checks made by

leaders, including subject leaders, do not identify that pupils have a limited understanding of some key aspects of their learning.

- Leaders are reviewing school systems that are designed to develop pupils' reading skills. Leaders have introduced tests that assess pupils' reading ages. This occurs regularly in Year 7 but less often as pupils move into key stage 4. Consequently, some leaders do not have a thorough understanding of the impact of reading strategies or the level of support needed to ensure that pupils leave school able to read proficiently.
- Nearly all staff who responded to Ofsted's inspection survey said that the training they receive from leaders helps to improve their teaching. Teachers who are new to the profession, or in the early stages of their career, appreciate the tailored support that they receive from more experienced staff and leaders. This small group of teachers is now more confident to trial new ideas in the classroom and deal with instances of poor behaviour. Leaders adapt the training programme for teachers when they identify a need to do so. For example, leaders' recent analysis of pupils' progress highlighted that the most able pupils were underachieving. Accordingly, leaders provided advice and guidance to teachers that ought to have a positive effect on their work with this group of pupils. Unfortunately, the training has not yet had time to make a positive impact on the progress of the most able. Presently, they continue to perform less well than their peers.
- Leadership of attendance is now strong and improving. The new leaders with responsibility for attendance are proactive and respond swiftly to support pupils who are increasingly absent from school. Leaders have developed appropriate systems to analyse patterns of attendance and they work closely with the families of pupils who are persistently absent. Because of this, pupils' attendance rates are far higher than they used to be.
- Leaders completed a review of the curriculum in 2016. Since then, pupils study fewer subjects, but receive more time to do so. Pupils begin their GCSE studies in Year 9 and are able to choose from a wide range of academic and vocational courses, including construction. A large proportion of pupils who study vocational courses go on to continue their studies in similar subjects when they leave school.
- Staff morale is high. Most staff share the vision of the principal and want to improve the life chances of the pupils and the community.

Governance of the school

- There is some confusion within school about the role and responsibilities of the AAB. Some members of the AAB were unsure about who holds leaders to account. In practice, the leaders of the trust carry out this important role via regular meetings and visits to school. Irrespective of this, inspection evidence demonstrates that some members of the AAB do not have a detailed understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school or the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Members of the AAB are committed to the school and want to 'play their part'. They frequently act as an intermediary between the school and the local community. Members have a variety of skills and come from a range of backgrounds, including education. The chair of the AAB is a visible presence in school. This ensures that he is

informed about developments, concerns and good news stories.

- Between the AAB and the board of governors, they ensure that they fulfil their statutory duties linked to safeguarding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils say that they feel safe. The vast majority of pupils who responded to Ofsted's inspection questionnaire say that there is an adult in school who they can speak to if something is worrying them. However, a number of pupils raised concerns in relation to bullying. The pupils in question said that bullying does happen and that teachers do not always resolve the issue successfully.
- Safeguarding leaders ensure that the safety of pupils is everyone's business. Staff receive regular safeguarding training and updates. Inspection evidence demonstrates that staff make swift referrals to external agencies and professionals when they have concerns relating to the safety of a pupil.
- Safeguarding leaders often look for opportunities to strengthen their valuable work. For example, leaders have recently secured additional funding to deliver a project linked to raising pupils' awareness of the dangers of sexting and child sexual exploitation.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Despite improving over time, the quality of teaching remains too variable across the school. Some pupils receive excellent teaching and make strong progress as a result. Sadly, pupils make weaker progress in subjects such as science and humanities. This is because some teachers have low expectations of pupils and are too accepting of poor-quality work.
- Leaders have introduced tried and tested systems to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding. Used effectively, these systems enable teachers to successfully meet the needs of pupils from their different starting points. However, most teachers rarely use pupils' assessment information when planning their lessons. Consequently, learning activities are often too easy or too hard for pupils to make at least good progress over time.
- The most able pupils told inspectors that the work they are given is often quite basic, covering learning that they grasped many years earlier. Similarly, there are some pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities who receive little or no additional support from teachers to help them learn. This is because a few teachers seldom use the pupil information that they receive from the special educational needs coordinator detailing the specific learning needs of each pupil. Unsurprisingly, these groups of pupils do less well than their peers.
- Inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that too many teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to deepen their understanding or get to grips with the 'nitty-gritty' of each topic. In weaker lessons, teachers often race through units of work to the detriment of pupils' broader understanding. For example, in geography, pupils were directed to label a diagram of a rainforest and then match pictures of deforestation

with their descriptive counterparts. The limited challenge and hasty transition to the next topic resulted in some pupils completely misunderstanding the global consequences of deforestation.

- Contrary to school expectations, a significant proportion of teachers do not give pupils regular or meaningful homework. Inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' planners demonstrates that on the odd occasion when homework is assigned, it is of little use and does not develop pupils' understanding further. More often than not, homework tasks are to finish incomplete classwork. Leaders acknowledge that homework is far from effective at this moment in time.
- Some much stronger teaching exists in the school. Pleasingly, and because of some excellent appointments, pupils say that the quality of teaching in the school is improving over time. Some lessons are characterised by positive relationships between the teacher and pupils and/or innovative approaches designed to 'hook' pupils' interests. For example, in a Year 9 construction lesson the teacher had created a pre-recorded video conference call to play to pupils. They were under the impression that they had received a live call from a prospective customer who wanted to commission a design. During the lesson, pupils were enthused and engaged, eager to do their very best for the teacher and 'customer'.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Many pupils are unable to articulate the stage that they are at in their learning or what it is they need to do to improve. As a result, pupils lack the skills and knowledge that they need in order to be a successful learner.
- In order to compensate for weaker teaching in the past, more teaching time is allocated to additional English and mathematics to help pupils to catch up. This is particularly true for some pupils in Year 11. A series of 'drop down' days take place to allow pupils to complete projects and investigations linked to the conservation of their body and mind. However, because of limited forward planning, they are few and far between. Consequently, pupils have limited opportunities to explore topics linked to PSHE education.
- Pupils benefit from a rich and varied assembly programme. Leaders are responsive to local and national issues. They invite a number of external agencies and speakers into school to talk to pupils and help prepare them for life in modern Britain. Following assemblies, pupils develop their speaking and listening skills as they are encouraged to discuss their opinions on a range of issues during their time in mentor groups/tutorial classes.
- Careers education is strong. Pupils receive excellent impartial advice and guidance, which results in the vast majority of pupils knowing what they want to do in the future, before they reach Year 11.

Behaviour

- Inspection evidence, including discussions with staff, demonstrates that the behaviour of pupils is much better than it was previously. On more than one occasion, inspectors heard accounts from staff and pupils that painted a worrying picture in terms of pupils' negative attitudes to learning in the past. However, since the introduction of a new behaviour policy in 2016, the majority of pupils follow instructions and meet the high standards teachers expect from them. Regrettably, there are still some pupils who choose to disrupt their learning and that of others. There is still work to do so that pupils' attitudes to their learning are consistently positive. As a result, the behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Following the introduction of the behaviour policy in 2016, the number of pupils who were excluded for a fixed period skyrocketed. The number of pupils who are excluded still remains too high and disadvantaged pupils are overrepresented. However, the proportion of pupils who receive an exclusion has halved since the initial spike in 2016.
- Some teachers do not apply the school's behaviour policy consistently. This sends mixed messages to pupils and dilutes the impact of the policy for those teachers who do apply it regularly. For example, during the inspection some lessons were disrupted by low-level chatter or pupils not paying attention. This behaviour went unchallenged by teachers.
- Attendance rates were below the national average between 2015 and 2017 and declining. Similarly, pupils were far more likely to be persistently absent compared to others nationally. However, recent appointments to the attendance team and more focused leadership of attendance have ensured that attendance has improved significantly this year. Information provided by the school demonstrates that attendance and persistent absence rates are now broadly in line with the national average.
- Leaders check the attendance of pupils who attend alternative provision regularly. They liaise closely with their counterparts and ensure that intervention is swift when they notice a pupil's attendance is declining. Consequently, pupils' attendance rates in alternative provision are similar, or better, when compared to their time in school.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In recent years, pupils' progress has been below average in a wide range of subjects, including English, mathematics, science, modern foreign languages, history and geography.
- In 2016 and 2017, disadvantaged pupils made progress that was much weaker than others in a wide range of subjects, including English and mathematics. However, despite still being below average, disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are making much stronger progress in a number of subjects.
- The most able pupils make less progress than pupils from different starting points. In 2017, the most able pupils made very weak progress in a wide range of GCSE subjects. The difference between the progress of the most able and others nationally widened in nearly all subjects. Because of a lack of challenge and low expectations, this group of

pupils continues to make less progress than their peers.

- Pupils generally enter the school with below average levels of attainment. Over time, most pupils leave with below average levels of attainment also. Leaders expect pupils to attain similar standards to the 2017 cohort despite attaining less well in primary school. However, inspection evidence identified significant gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills, with only a few weeks left until their examination. For example, pupils in English lacked a basic understanding of the text of Shakespeare's 'Macbeth' and were seemingly lacking the knowledge required for their examination.
- Pupils who enter the school with below average attainment access a range of bespoke support programmes to help them improve their reading, writing and mathematical skills. Following individual teaching sessions and additional English and mathematics lessons, most pupils who need to catch up now do so by the end of Year 7.
- The progress of pupils who attend alternative provision is variable. For many, the change of setting and appropriate curriculum acts as a catalyst for improvement. For others, issues with poor attendance and behaviour remain. This slows their progress and means that they are less likely to progress to employment, further education or training.
- Pupils' reading is improving slowly because the teaching of literacy is more prominent in the school. Since the appointment of a teacher to be the 'reading champion' in September 2017, a number of effective initiatives have been introduced that are helping pupils to develop their reading skills. Pupils who are in need of support receive regular coaching and attend reading sessions with the librarian and English teachers.
- Many pupils progress into the school's sixth form. Those who do not, receive high-quality advice and guidance appropriate to their differing needs. Nearly all Year 11 pupils progressed to further education, employment or training in 2017.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- The sixth form is smaller than average. However, students are able to choose from a wide variety of subjects due to the successful partnership arrangements with other sixth forms from within the trust. Leaders have successfully managed to organise transport, timetables and share leadership to ensure that students receive excellent support and make good progress.
- The majority of students study work-related courses that are closely linked to their future career aspirations. On these courses, students' progress has improved and has been above average for the last few years. The progress students made in 2017 placed the school in the top 20% of schools nationally.
- The number of students studying academic qualifications is relatively low. In some classes, there may only be one student. Consequently, attainment and progress information can vary considerably, from year to year, due to the statistical anomalies this often creates. Notwithstanding this, students studying academic qualifications, in 2017, made below average progress, whereas the 2016 cohort made above average progress.
- Students who did not attain grades A* to C, or 4+, in English and/or mathematics follow appropriate courses. Approximately one third of students who sat English and/or

mathematics examinations for the second time, in 2017, improved their original grade.

- Teachers in the sixth form have secure subject knowledge, know the courses well and plan effective lessons that meet the needs of students. Teachers are ambitious and demanding of students. As a result, current students continue to make strong progress in work-related courses.
- Over time, retention rates have been broadly average. Recently, the proportion of students who leave the sixth form prior to completing their course has been reducing. At this point in the year, only one student has left the sixth form early.
- School and trust leaders monitor the quality of the sixth form well. They have an accurate understanding of its effectiveness. Leaders meet with staff from the other sixth forms every six weeks to review students' progress and well-being. Consequently, if a student requires additional academic or personal support, they do not have to wait long to receive it.
- When students are together on one site during their 'home days', they attend a range of lessons that develop their understanding of life after the sixth form, progression to higher education and employability skills. Students welcome the opportunities to develop their leadership skills by taking part in activities such as paired reading with pupils in key stage 3.
- Students' behaviour in the sixth form is mature, calm and purposeful. They attend school regularly. When they do not, leaders follow the same procedures as they would for any other pupil in the school. Very little learning time is lost as a result.

School details

Unique reference number	135942
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10048260

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 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	732
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	53
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Craig Sahman
Principal	Anna Rooney
Telephone number	01709 864 001
Website	www.dewarenne.org.uk
Email address	admin@dewarenne.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 November 2015

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and receive support from the pupil premium is significantly above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average.
- A new principal joined the school in September 2016.
- Post-16 education is delivered via a federated approach consisting of five trust schools.

- The school uses three alternative providers: St. Wilfrid's Academy, Engage Training and Doncaster College.
- The school is a member of Delta Academies Trust. Responsibility for the school rests with the board of trustees. The structure of the trust's governance and management can be found on the school's website.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited a wide range of lessons across the school. Many of the observations in lessons were carried out with the principal.
- Meetings were held with senior and subject leaders, teachers and members of the trust and academy advisory board (AAB).
- An inspector spoke on the telephone with a representative from each of the alternative providers.
- Inspectors held informal and formal discussions with pupils, observed mentor/tutor groups and pupil interactions during social times.
- Inspectors listened to a group of Year 7 and Year 8 pupils read.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and scrutinised a wide range of evidence, including the school's self-evaluation, analysis of performance information, action plans and evaluations, attendance and behaviour records, safeguarding files, recruitment checks and pupils' work.
- Inspectors took into account the 35 responses from parents who completed Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Thirty-nine members of staff and 104 pupils completed Ofsted's online staff survey. All of these responses were taken into consideration.

Inspection team

Lee Elliott, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Mike Tull	Ofsted Inspector
Sara Crawshaw	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Cook	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