

William Allitt School

Sunnyside, Newhall, Swadlincote, Derbyshire DE11 0TL

Inspection dates

11–12 September 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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders' actions to improve the overall quality of education have not been rapid enough in some areas.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently strong across the school. Leaders are not rigorous enough in following up weaker practice or ensuring that effective teaching practice is shared more widely.
- Pupils do not make consistently strong progress across the school.
- Leaders have taken some effective action to improve the school. They have not, however, checked the effectiveness of their actions thoroughly enough. The information they use to plan their next actions for improvement is not as accurate as it could be.
- Leaders have raised expectations for behaviour. More pupils value their education. However, leaders are not as effective as they could be in further reducing the incidents of poor behaviour. The proportion of fixed-term exclusions is above average.
- Leaders' actions have not helped ensure that all groups of pupils achieve good attendance.
- The governing body provides leaders with support and challenge. Senior leaders do not, however, provide sufficiently high-quality information so that the governing body can better hold them to account.
- The school's website does not meet the statutory requirements regarding what it must publish.

The school has the following strengths

- An enthusiastic and developing senior leadership team supports the committed headteacher. Leaders have established a firm base to support further improvement.
- Faculty leaders play an important role in improving the school. They are beginning to raise standards in their areas of responsibility.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Leaders provide pupils with a comprehensive careers programme.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress has improved. In 2017, disadvantaged pupils made similar progress to other pupils nationally.
- Pupils are safe and are cared for well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, by ensuring that:
 - leaders more effectively measure the impact of their actions to improve pupils' progress and use their findings to plan their next steps for school improvement
 - leaders methodically check improvements made in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and that improvements are sustained
 - senior leaders provide the governing body with high-quality information so that it can better hold leaders to account
 - the governing body publishes all statutory information on the school's website.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and make sure that all groups of pupils make consistently strong progress by ensuring that all teachers:
 - make use of opportunities to share the most effective practice in the school
 - act quickly to improve the areas identified for improvement in their teaching practice.
- Improve pupils' behaviour and attendance by:
 - further reducing the number of incidents of poor behaviour and the proportion of pupils who are subject to a fixed-term exclusion
 - developing more effective ways of ensuring that pupils who are persistently absent attend more regularly, especially for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.

An external review of governance should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- There have been significant changes to staffing since the previous inspection. New senior leaders have been internally appointed and a number of new teaching staff have joined the school. During this turbulent time, senior leaders have improved the school. However, improvements have not been rapid enough to ensure consistently good outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders are determined and committed to improving the school. Senior leaders have an understanding of the quality of education at the school. They have identified the key areas of the school that need improvement and implemented systems and approaches with a view to rectifying the weaknesses. Leaders do not, however, check carefully enough that their actions are making a sufficient difference to improving the school's overall effectiveness. They do not refine their actions sharply enough to target their next steps of improvement.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too variable across the school. Changes in staffing have undoubtedly slowed the pace of improvement. However, leaders have not shared the most effective teaching practice well enough across the school. Leaders challenge poor-quality teaching. They provide training for teachers to improve their practice. Leaders are not, however, as rigorous as they could be in methodically checking that improvements are sustained.
- The progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, despite some improvement, remains too varied. Some pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making good progress. Leaders do not, however, check the effectiveness of the actions they have taken to improve pupils' progress well enough.
- Leaders have ensured that the use of the extra funding for disadvantaged pupils is more effective than at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' progress is improving. However, again, leaders are not as effective as they could be in carefully checking pupils' progress to help ensure that the funding has the maximum impact.
- Leaders provide pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum. Subject choices at key stage 4 are suitable for pupils to be successful in the next stage of their education or training. The delivery of the curriculum supports good progress in some subjects. This is not yet, however, consistent across all subjects. A small number of pupils follow an alternative curriculum that is appropriate to their needs.
- Leaders have raised expectations of pupils' good behaviour. They have amended the school's behaviour policy to reflect this. They do not, however, review behaviour records well enough to more sharply identify where behaviour still needs to be improved.
- The school provides pupils with a 'RISE' (resilience, innovation, skills, environment) programme. Pupils learn about world religions, human rights and political figures. This supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It also contributes to pupils' understanding of British values.
- Faculty leaders are committed to improving their respective areas of responsibility and developing their roles. They are now using similar approaches to checking the work of

their teams. Faculty leaders told the inspectors how much they value this standardised approach.

- Senior leaders have established a comprehensive assessment system that teachers use to check pupils' progress. They have supported teachers in becoming more confident in the assessments they make of pupils' attainment and progress.
- Leaders' use of the Year 7 catch-up funding is effective. Pupils who join the school with low literacy and/or numeracy skills receive extra support. Most of these pupils catch up with other pupils by the end of Year 7.
- The local authority has provided the school with effective support. Leaders also benefit from informal collaboration with other schools. Plans are in place to join a teaching alliance partnership to provide more opportunities to share good practice.

Governance of the school

- During a period of instability, the governing body has focused on the school's academy order and finances. It has not paid enough attention to checking on leaders' actions to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
- Members of the governing body are committed to the school. They bring a broad range of skills and experience to their roles. There is, however, a lack of structure and thoroughness in the procedures used to measure the school's effectiveness. Senior leaders do not provide the governing body with high-quality information about the actions they take to improve the school. Governors are, therefore, not suitably informed about some aspects of the school's work.
- Individual governors carry out checks to validate the school's information. At times, they ask leaders challenging questions. Governors do not, however, share their findings methodically enough with other governors or routinely check on any identified improvements.
- Since the last inspection, governors have increased the checks they make on the use of extra funding for disadvantaged pupils. This has made a positive difference to disadvantaged pupils' progress. They do not, however, have a sufficiently well-informed understanding of the effectiveness of other funding. This includes the Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium and the funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Governors have not ensured that they have published all statutory information on the school's website.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. The designated teacher for child protection and safeguarding thoroughly implements procedures to keep pupils safe. Checks to ensure the suitability of staff and volunteers are carried out correctly. Staff and governors are trained effectively. Staff understand the systems to report concerns. This includes those associated with radicalisation and extremism. Records are detailed and well maintained.

- The curriculum contributes well to raising pupils' awareness of safe practices, for instance, when using the internet and mobile phones. Groups of pupils who spoke with the inspectors said that they feel safe in the school. Adults work with parents and carers and external agencies to make sure that pupils are supported and kept safe. The majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey agreed that their children are safe and cared for well.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not yet consistently strong across the school. There is not enough high-quality teaching to help pupils make good progress.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are generally positive. When staff have high expectations for pupils' conduct, pupils respond well and make good progress. However, some pupils do not focus well enough on their learning. Teachers and other adults do not consistently reinforce expectations. At times, misbehaviour disrupts learning.
- Teachers do not consistently use information about pupils' learning to deliver learning well matched to pupils' needs. For instance, teachers are sometimes too slow to identify and support pupils who start to fall behind. Similarly, they are not timely in providing some pupils with enough challenge. Pupils' progress, therefore, is not as good as it should be.
- Teachers do not use questioning consistently well to check pupils' understanding. Some teachers do, however, use questioning skilfully to challenge pupils and make them think harder. For example, in mathematics, pupils were deliberately given incorrect answers to generate thoughtful discussions and make them think more deeply about their understanding of algebraic equations.
- Some teachers do not use their strong subject knowledge to plan learning at an appropriate level for some pupils. Sometimes, pupils are confused and not able to carry out the tasks teachers have set. At other times, however, teachers use their subject knowledge well. This was illustrated in mathematics, when pupils gained a clear understanding of area and circumference because pupils' misconceptions were quickly identified and rectified.
- Teaching assistants do not provide consistently effective support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Where teaching assistants are most effective, pupils' understanding improves and they make good progress.
- Teaching does not provide enough opportunities to reinforce pupils' learning. For instance, teaching does not routinely develop pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum. Homework, however, is generally set in line with the school's policy. Pupils benefit from consolidating their learning and practising new skills through the activities teachers set.
- Good-quality teaching practice does exist within the school. Inspectors saw some strong teaching across a number of subjects. In geography, high expectations, resources matched to pupils' needs and engaging tasks enhanced pupils' learning about volcanoes and earthquakes. Pupils say that the quality of teaching in the school

is improving over time.

- Most teachers use the school's marking and feedback policy well. Pupils told the inspectors that they appreciate the opportunities they get to improve their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Some pupils have not yet developed the skills they need to become confident learners. Many pupils know how to be successful learners, but some teachers do not plan lessons well enough for pupils to engage in their learning.
- Not all pupils show respect towards each other and adults. At times, a minority of pupils use unacceptable and aggressive language. Many pupils, however, show very positive attitudes to all aspects of their learning. These pupils also show a great deal of courtesy and respect.
- Staff do not routinely challenge the appearance of pupils when it falls below the standards they have set. Some pupils do not take enough pride in the presentation of their work, which staff also often leave unchallenged.
- Leaders provide pupils with opportunities to develop an understanding of British values and become good citizens. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development supports this. A few pupils, however, do not reflect on their learning or consider the impact of their actions well enough.
- A variety of different clubs, ranging from those for dance to film, contribute to pupils' personal development. Some pupils, however, choose not to take part in the activities provided. Leaders have not considered pupils' views well enough, nor reviewed what they offer in order to bring about increased participation.
- Pupils have opportunities to contribute as leaders in their school community. For instance, pupils become sport or anti-bullying ambassadors. Activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and the Year 7 enterprise programme encourage pupils to develop a range of skills.
- Leaders work effectively to keep pupils safe. They provide pupils with opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe, fit and healthy. Pupils told the inspectors that they feel safe.
- Leaders provide pupils with a strong and impartial careers guidance programme. Pupils are well informed about their choices for the next stage of their education, training or employment. All Year 10 pupils benefit from work experience. Pupils told the inspectors how much they value this.
- Leaders check pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare for the small number who attend alternative education.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Some pupils' attitudes to their learning are not consistently positive. At times, pupils do not concentrate on their learning well enough and teachers do not routinely challenge this poor behaviour. A small number of pupils and parents also believe that some pupils' poor behaviour disrupts the learning of others. When pupils' attitudes to their learning are positive, this has a beneficial impact on the progress they make.
- Staff do not use the behaviour policy consistently. Leaders have set higher expectations for good behaviour. The number of incidents of poor behaviour is high, but is beginning to reduce. Until recently, leaders' actions had reduced the proportion of pupils receiving a fixed-term exclusion. Recently, increased expectations of pupils' behaviour have resulted in higher than average fixed-term exclusions.
- Leaders have not sustained the improvements made in pupils' attendance. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has increased. This is especially true for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Leaders have introduced more approaches to support pupils and their parents in achieving good attendance. These have yet to make a positive difference to improving pupils' attendance.
- Leaders have taken effective action to ensure that pupils are punctual to school and lessons. Pupils generally conduct themselves well during social time, but there is some boisterous behaviour at times.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils are not yet making consistently strong progress across the school. In 2016, pupils' progress across a range of subjects was among the lowest nationally. In 2017, pupils' progress improved, but remained below average.
- High-quality teaching is not yet embedded across the school. The progress of pupils who left the school in 2018, and those currently in the school, was still below average. However, progress, especially in English and in mathematics, is moving closer to national averages.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities have not performed consistently well over time. Leaders have not checked well enough the approaches used to support these pupils. They do not, therefore, provide targeted support for these pupils to make consistently good progress. However, there are some successes. Pupils who have an education, health and care plan did particularly well in 2017. In some subjects, such as mathematics, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress.
- The proportion of pupils who enter and achieve the English Baccalaureate is well below national averages. This is predominantly because of weak teaching in, and low take-up of, modern foreign languages. Leaders' efforts to address this have been slow. Recent changes have yet to see more pupils choosing a language as one of their key stage 4 options.
- Leaders are taking action to eliminate the variation in pupils' progress in different subjects. They have not yet been fully effective. Pupils' attainment remains lower than that seen nationally in a range of subjects. It is, however, improving in some subjects.

This is especially the case in triple science, food technology, music, French and history. Pupils make good progress in geography, which is a strength of the school.

- The progress of disadvantaged pupils currently in the school, and those who left in 2018, is better than at the time of the previous inspection. In 2017, disadvantaged pupils' progress improved. Disadvantaged pupils made similar progress to other pupils nationally. This was especially true in English and in mathematics.
- Leaders set ambitious targets for all pupils, including the most able pupils. In some subjects, including English literature, triple science, art, graphics, textiles and media, the proportion of pupils achieving the highest GCSE levels is increasing. The same improvement, however, is not yet consistent across all subjects.
- As the quality of teaching improves, pupils' progress in key stage 3 is improving across more subjects. A higher proportion of pupils are reaching the ambitious targets that leaders set.
- The proportion of pupils who are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment is rising. The proportion of pupils who move on to some form of higher education is typically above the national average. Leaders prepare well pupils who follow an alternative curriculum for the next stage of their education.

School details

Unique reference number	112938
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10052967

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	715
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Frost
Headteacher	Jacqueline Cooper
Telephone number	01283 216404
Website	www.williamallitt.derbyshire.sch.uk
Email address	info@williamallitt.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 July 2016

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. Since the last inspection, there have been changes in leadership and staffing.
- The vast majority of the pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below that found nationally. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is very small.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is average. The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, including those who have an education, health and care plan, is also average.
- A very small number of pupils receive their education at the Newhall Support Centre.
- The school does not meet the requirements for the publication of specified information on its website. This includes some information about the school's curriculum, the year 7 catch-up premium, membership of the governing body, and careers' leaders' contact details.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 30 lessons. Some of this learning was observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Discussions took place with school staff, members of the governing body and a local authority representative.
- The inspectors met with three groups of pupils and talked informally with pupils. There were no responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey. An inspector also listened to Year 7 pupils reading. Inspectors observed assembly, tutor time and pupils' social time.
- The inspectors took into account the 12 responses from parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including nine free-text comments. The inspectors also considered the 33 staff responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a broad range of evidence, including the school's analysis of its strengths and weaknesses, planning and monitoring documentation, the work in pupils' books, records relating to attendance and behaviour, and the school's information on pupils' current progress and attainment in English, mathematics and a range of other subjects.
- The school's child protection and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised. The inspectors reviewed the school's website to confirm whether it met the requirements on the publication of specified information.

Inspection team

Vondra Mays, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Nigel Boyd	Ofsted Inspector
Nina Bee	Ofsted Inspector
Christine Horrocks	Ofsted 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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