

Westbourne Academy

Marlow Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 5JN

Inspection dates

5–6 March 2019

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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The principal has a clear and ambitious vision that is shared across the school.
- School leaders and governors have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and take effective action to bring about further improvement.
- The school's broad, balanced and flexible curriculum meets pupils' needs.
- Pupils enjoy positive relationships with their teachers and engage productively in their work because teaching is typically effective.
- Across the school, teachers are proactive in promoting pupils' use and understanding of subject-specific terminology.
- High-quality training and mentoring for teachers help promote improvements to the quality of teaching and learning.
- Leaders have robust systems for monitoring the quality of provision and putting in place interventions, for example to improve pupils' behaviour.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are safe and secure, both at school and for those attending alternative provision.
- Pupils behave well, both in lessons and around the school site. The school has taken effective action to reduce the number of pupils who are given a fixed-term exclusion over the past two years.
- Pupils benefit from an effective programme of careers education that prepares them well for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
- Leaders are diligent in their efforts to engage with parents and carers, especially those who speak English as an additional language.
- Some variability remains in the quality of teaching in some subjects, for example in the quality of teachers' questioning to assess understanding and bring challenge. Provision in science is not as strong as in some other subjects.
- The low reading ability of some pupils is a barrier to their learning.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils, although improving, continues to be below that of other pupils within the school.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. Too many disadvantaged pupils are persistently absent from school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attendance and reduce the extent of persistent absence, in particular for disadvantaged pupils.
- Support disadvantaged pupils to ensure that their progress comes in line with that of other pupils within the school and nationally.
- Improve teaching and learning further by ensuring that:
 - good practice in challenging and questioning pupils is shared across all subjects
 - all pupils read widely so that they understand the language needed to access some subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal has clear values and a strong drive to improve the school, and provides effective leadership. His high expectations have created a positive environment for pupils' learning and personal development.
- The academy improvement document has clear, appropriate priorities which are agreed with the trust. Leaders monitor the implementation of the plans carefully. They respond quickly, with support from the trust, when weaknesses are identified. When attendance dipped during the autumn term, the school appointed an attendance officer whose work has helped to increase pupils' attendance.
- The strong senior leadership team holds middle leaders to account well. It provides effective mentoring and support. Middle leaders feel well supported and challenged by their line managers and contribute to decision-making across the school.
- School leaders respond quickly to underperformance. For example, the predictions for pupils' performance in English in 2018 were overgenerous. As a result, the school is using trained external examiners to mark the assessments of the current Year 11 pupils and make predictions for this year. Other subjects are involved in national programmes to improve the accuracy of their predictions.
- Leaders value the support provided by the trust. The trust-wide subject networks are helping colleagues to share good practice, such as when subject leaders planned jointly for the revised GCSE courses. Leaders use the findings of the trust's annual review when planning improvements. For example, the review prompted improved supervision of pupils at break and lunchtime. This has improved site safety.
- The school has taken effective action to improve the quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection. Robust systems have been introduced to monitor the provision and staff appreciate the high-quality training available to improve their teaching. Newly qualified teachers are well supported by school leaders and subject mentors. They benefit from a comprehensive training programme in a range of areas that is bespoke to the needs of individuals.
- Throughout the school, staff are hard-working and committed to ensuring that pupils thrive, feel safe and achieve well. Pupils and staff are proud of the improvements already achieved. The learning environment provides a secure and stimulating place for pupils to learn and develop.
- Typically, parents responding to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, think that the school is well led and managed and that leaders respond well to parental concerns. One parent, with views similar to others, said, 'The school is constantly and consistently driving standards up.'
- The school provides parents with regular information regarding their children's progress, attainment, attendance and commitment to learning.
- Leaders have ensured that all pupils access a broad and balanced academic curriculum. At key stage 4, there are three possible pathways which pupils follow according to their aptitudes and interests. Leaders ensure that pupils who join the school with below-

average attainment benefit from additional tuition in English and mathematics. This helps these pupils to improve their literacy and numeracy skills.

- Pupils also benefit from participating in a range of extra-curricular activities at lunchtime and after school. These activities include the arts, sport, creative writing, magic and Latin. Pupils have had opportunities to visit Berlin, France, Spain and the First World War battlefield sites.
- Leaders use the Year 7 catch-up funding to provide pupils with additional mathematics and English teaching. Pupils also benefit from support to boost their vocabulary and improve their handwriting, and a phonics programme for those with very low reading ages. These forms of support develop pupils' social and emotional skills and help the large majority of pupils to develop the literacy and numeracy skills they need to learn well in all subjects.

Governance of the school

- Governors undertake their strategic and statutory functions effectively and are involved in the life of the school where appropriate.
- Governors know about and understand the actions taken to bring about improvement. They regularly receive detailed reports from middle and senior leaders, visit lessons with school leaders and speak with pupil groups to gain first-hand information. These activities enable them to increase their knowledge about the implementation and impact of actions. Governors regularly check the appropriateness of the school's arrangements for safeguarding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding. They follow agreed procedures and work well with external agencies so that vulnerable pupils receive the support they need in a timely manner. The trust contributes to promoting this culture by producing a monthly safeguarding newsletter.
- Leaders ensure that the correct pre-employment checks on staff appointed to work at the school are completed and that the single central record of these is properly maintained.
- The designated safeguard leader is experienced and well informed. She has built effective links with external agencies and, consequently, there is a regular flow of information regarding vulnerable pupils.
- The school's records indicate that the information relating to safeguarding concerns about pupils is recorded clearly and in detail. Cases are reviewed at appropriate intervals.
- Pupils are taught how to keep safe. They are well informed about e-safety and sexting. The personal, social and health education curriculum helps pupils to understand and minimise a range of risks, including social media abuse, cyber bullying, gang activity and knife crime.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The relationships between teachers and pupils in the classroom are having a positive influence on learning. They encourage pupils to be willing participants during lessons and to ask for help when needed. Lessons are well planned with a clear structure. Pupils quickly engage with learning activities and time in lessons is typically used productively.
- Where learning is most effective, teachers use their good subject knowledge to sequence tasks to help pupils develop their knowledge. Teachers plan engaging tasks that provide appropriate challenge for pupils of all abilities. Teachers promote pupils' understanding of subject-specific language well.
- Across all subjects, regular assessment takes place so that both teachers and pupils know how well pupils are doing and targeted intervention strategies can be implemented to improve the progress of pupils who are falling behind.
- Teachers regularly set homework across the curriculum. Parents clearly stated that their children receive appropriate homework for their age.
- Questioning by teachers encourages pupils to contribute in the classroom. However, questioning to assess the pupils' degree of understanding or to challenge pupils to think more deeply about topics varies across the school, particularly in science.
- Some pupils are not regular readers. For a small number, this, coupled with their below-average reading abilities on joining the school, limits their ability to fully access the curriculum.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school is active in promoting pupils' welfare. Mental health training for parents, pupils and staff, including around issues such as self-harm, helps to raise awareness of the issues. Leaders report that staff note and pass on their concerns more readily as a result, which means that pupils can get the help that they need.
- The school's 'Oasis centre' supports vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) through individualised learning programmes. The centre provides support that is well matched to the needs of vulnerable pupils.
- Pupils with SEND told inspectors that they are supported well by teachers and the pastoral team. Staff can access extensive information regarding different types of needs, including profiles of pupils. They use this information to tailor the support they provide to individuals.
- The school has strong practice in supporting children who are looked after. This was also verified by a recent review by the Suffolk virtual headteacher.
- The school is committed to helping pupils who speak English as an additional language to fully participate in the school. The school ensures that those who join during the

school year with limited writing and speaking skills in English benefit from an appropriate programme of support. The coordinator for pupils who speak English as an additional language works flexibly within school, and with parents and external agencies, to meet the very different needs of individual pupils.

- Pupils generally take pride in their work and their school. Pupils look smart in their school uniform. School buildings are well looked after and free from graffiti and litter.
- The school provides additional events for vulnerable pupils, including an outdoor learning day to help them cope with the changes they face when joining the school in Year 7.
- Leaders have a strong relationship with alternative providers and robust procedures ensure that pupils' safeguarding, attendance and progress are secure.
- Most pupils display positive attitudes to learning. Occasionally, when teaching is less inspiring, pupils can lose focus and do not make the gains they should.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school's recent changes to its behaviour strategies are understood by pupils and are contributing to a reduction in the incidence of low-level disruptive behaviour. Inspectors found pupils to be polite and courteous.
- Pupils are punctual and well prepared for lessons. They usually behave well, whether working individually or in groups, and focus on the task at hand. The overwhelming majority of pupils who spoke to inspectors said behaviour was typically good during lessons. The rare incidents of misbehaviour are well managed by teachers, who are consistent in their application of the school's behaviour policy.
- Pupils are confident that the school will deal effectively with bullying on the rare occasions when it occurs. The school's records demonstrate that leaders have taken a range of appropriate and effective actions in response to bullying.
- Leaders work hard to promote high attendance. In 2017, following two years of improvement, attendance was above the national average. Leaders appointed an attendance officer in November 2018 after a subsequent fall in attendance. Attendance is now rising again but too many disadvantaged pupils are persistently absent from school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The published outcomes are significantly influenced by factors that are outside the control of the school. For example, for the present Year 11 cohort, approximately 13% of the pupils have no prior key stage 2 score against which to accurately measure progress. Almost a fifth of the Year 11 cohort for 2017/18 joined the school after the end of Year 7. The same is true for the present Year 11 cohort. Inspection evidence indicates that, overall, pupils make good progress.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language who join the school after the beginning of Year 7 often make good progress and achieve well at key stage 4. Some

pupils who have little or no spoken English when they join the school go on to achieve very highly because they are well supported.

- Support for disadvantaged pupils is improving the progress of current pupils, although it remains below that of other pupils within the school who have the same starting points. Disadvantaged pupils in Year 11 are benefiting from participation in additional Saturday morning tuition sessions.
- The support provided and the renewed focus on outcomes are allowing pupils with SEND to make better progress. The school's robust tracking systems show the current progress of these pupils in English and mathematics to be strong at key stage 3. At key stage 4, there was a three-year trend of improvement until 2018. Current pupils are continuing to do well, especially those with an education, health and care plan.
- Pupils in key stage 4 are being well prepared for public examinations. Support sessions are available every evening after school and on Saturday mornings. These are well attended by pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. The school's monitoring information indicates that Year 11 pupils overall are making good progress.
- Since the appointment of the present principal, the school has worked to increase the number of qualifications that pupils gain. Prior to the previous inspection, pupils with SEND gained qualifications in an average of five subjects and they now obtain an average of eight.
- A small number of pupils are not regular or fluent readers. This limits the extent of the progress they are able to make in some subjects.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, employment or training. Leaders provide a school-based careers programme from Year 7, with an emphasis on raising aspirations, including via university visits and a science, technology, engineering and mathematics event. Pupils benefit from access to independent careers advice and information from other providers before they make their GCSE and post-16 options choices. This work has helped the school to reduce the number of pupils who do not progress into education, employment or training.

School details

Unique reference number	139288
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10058681

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,002
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Bernard Dickenson
Principal	Garry Trott
Telephone number	01473 742 315
Website	www.westbourne.atrust.org.uk
Email address	office@westbourne.atrust.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–9 November 2016

Information about this school

- The principal has been in post since 2014.
- The school is an average-sized secondary school.
- The school became an academy in February 2013 and part of the Academy Transformation Trust in April 2013.
- There have been changes to governance structures since the school joined the trust. Responsibility for governance rests with the trust board. Some responsibilities are delegated to the local academy committee, which works closely with the school.
- The school has a vertical tutoring system and is split into four houses, each one led by a head of house.
- The school is part of the Ipswich Opportunity Area.

- The school uses several alternative providers. These are Lindbergh Campus, Parkside Academy, Chantry Academy, Alderwood Academy, St Aubyn Centre and Poplar Adolescent Centre.
- One third of the school's pupils speak English as an additional language, which is above average.
- Up to 15% of pupils in year groups join the school after the beginning of Year 7.
- The school has pupils from 15 out of 17 possible ethnic groups, which is above the national average.
- The school participates in two Erasmus projects with a Romanian and a Lithuanian school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in lessons across a range of subjects, including some jointly with school leaders.
- Inspectors met groups of pupils and also talked with others informally during break and lunchtimes.
- An inspector undertook a learning walk with the coordinator for SEND.
- Discussions were held with staff, including senior and middle leaders, a representative of the Academy Transformation Trust, newly and recently qualified teachers, the attendance officer and the member of staff who oversees the work for pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- Meetings were held with the chair and another member of the local academy committee and with an executive member of the trust. A telephone conversation was held with the chief executive officer of the trust.
- Telephone conversations were held with staff at all the alternative providers attended by a small number of Westbourne Academy pupils.
- Inspectors listened to pupils involved in the Year 7 catch-up group read.
- Inspectors took into account the 40 responses to Ofsted’s online Parent View survey during this academic year and the results from the staff and pupil surveys.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents. These included the school’s self-evaluation, the academy improvement plan, a selection of policies and information about the school’s performance.

Inspection team

David Hutton, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Diana Fletcher	Ofsted Inspector
Gerard Batty	Ofsted Inspector

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