

South Wigston High School

St Thomas Road, Wigston, Leicestershire LE18 4TA

Inspection dates

30 April–1 May 2019

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

- Since the last inspection, leaders and governors have not improved the school sufficiently. Despite developments in teaching and pupils' outcomes, they are not consistently good enough across the school.
- Pupils do not achieve as well as they should across the school. Although pupils' attainment and progress are improving over time, they are not consistently good.
- The progress of boys, in a range of subjects, lags behind that of girls who have similar starting points.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Strengths in some parts of the school are not evident throughout. As a result, pupils' learning experiences are too variable.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. Teachers do not routinely provide learning opportunities that enable pupils to make good progress.
- Some teachers do not routinely plan lessons that engage and motivate pupils. For example, boys do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Behaviour is not always managed consistently. Some teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are not high enough.
- Disadvantaged pupils have made less progress than other pupils nationally. However, their progress has started to improve. Leaders do not carefully monitor and measure the impact of targeted pupil premium funding.
- The support that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive has improved. However, teachers do not routinely plan to meet the additional needs of these pupils.
- Leaders and governors do not routinely check the effectiveness of their actions to improve outcomes for pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders are committed to improving the school. The impact of leaders' actions is clearly evident in some of the school's work.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities and additional learning enhance pupils' enjoyment of school.
- The curriculum is suitably broad and balanced and adapted appropriately when needed.
- The personal development of pupils is a strong feature of the school. Pupils' attendance has improved. They are safe and cared for well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership and management of the school by ensuring that:
 - actions to improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils are regularly analysed so that leaders and governors can carefully measure their impact
 - leaders at all levels focus closely on the rates of progress being made by different groups, especially boys and disadvantaged pupils, throughout the school
 - leaders monitor and evaluate the school's effectiveness more precisely.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better in order to enable all groups of pupils to achieve well by ensuring that:
 - teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and provide appropriately challenging work in a timely manner
 - teachers provide learning activities that engage and motivate pupils, especially boys
 - teachers use the information they are provided with to plan and meet the needs of pupils with SEND.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - building on the strategies to improve behaviour in lessons so that it is consistently good.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Although leaders have worked diligently to improve the school, they have not secured consistently good outcomes for pupils. Pupils make overall progress that is broadly average. However, there is too much variation in the rates of progress made by different groups of pupils, particularly boys. Leaders recognise that they still have work to do to raise aspirations and expectations across the school so that pupils make consistently good progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils have made slow progress from their starting points compared to other pupils historically. Leaders do not have robust plans in place to ensure that these pupils progress more quickly. They do not monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies used with these pupils sufficiently well.
- Some of the plans to speed up the progress made by disadvantaged pupils lack precision and do not sharply focus on removing barriers to achievement. However, information provided by leaders indicates that disadvantaged pupils are now making quicker progress, particularly at key stage 3. This is because leaders have emphasised the importance of raising achievement among this group. Teachers and other members of staff therefore know which disadvantaged pupils are at risk of underachievement and are taking positive steps to speed up the progress they make.
- Senior leaders have been determined to strengthen middle leadership in the core subjects and in other curriculum areas, where required. As a result, recent appointments to the leadership of English and mathematics have been made. These appointments are already having an impact on the quality of work produced by pupils, with some improvements in their progress too.
- 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.
- Leaders are taking action to improve the quality of teaching, but this has not been robust enough to ensure that all pupils achieve well. Boys achieve less well than girls in the school and improvements in teaching have not been sufficiently focused on raising their rates of progress consistently.
- Leaders have not been able to ensure that teaching is consistently good. Leaders are overoptimistic about the improvement in the quality of teaching because they have placed too much emphasis on individual observations of teaching. Leaders have not focused enough on what pupils' progress and outcomes say about the quality of teaching over time. Changes in staffing have undoubtedly slowed the pace of improvement, particularly in science and information and communication technology. However, leaders have not shared the most effective teaching practice well enough across the school.

- Leaders challenge poor-quality teaching and they provide training for teachers to improve their practice. Leaders have demonstrated an ability to improve teaching in some areas where outcomes have not been strong, notably in mathematics. Leaders are not, however, as rigorous as they could be in methodically checking that improvements are sustained. However, newly qualified teachers say they are well supported at the school and are helped to develop their teaching.
- Frequently, leaders know when pupils are falling behind but they intervene too slowly, until recently, to ensure that all pupils make good progress. The programme for Year 11 pupils is now well established and these pupils value the support they receive.
- Leaders have raised expectations of pupils' good behaviour. They have taken many opportunities to ensure that staff are aware of the school's behaviour policy through regular briefings. However, there is still too much inconsistency in the application of the policy, leading to too much low-level disruption in lessons. Many pupils are rightly concerned about the number of lessons where disruption occurs, although this is more prevalent at key stage 3.
- Leaders provide pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum overall. They have taken steps to adapt the curriculum for current Year 10 pupils to better meet their needs more effectively. This has included reducing the number of examination-based subjects that most pupils study. 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. Leaders are clear about their ambition for the proportion of pupils studying subjects in the English Baccalaureate performance measure. However, this is well below the government's ambition. Leaders and governors have determined that this meets the needs of their pupils, particularly with the current Year 10.
- Leaders provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities for pupils. These include enjoyable options in sports and the performing arts as well as participating in the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme. Pupils benefit socially from a number of the activities open to them.
- The new leader for pupils with SEND is beginning to put strategies in place to raise rates of progress for these pupils. However, this is yet to be monitored well enough for leaders to evaluate how effectively the additional funding is being used.
- Children looked after are well cared for at this school. They receive effective support and consequently attend regularly and make progress.
- Leaders prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils who attend the school are often from White British backgrounds. School leaders make sure that pupils learn about the wide range of ethnic groups, cultures and traditions that contribute to British society. The 'cultural capital' programme encourages pupils to develop their curiosity about the world around them and takes place in tutor time. Displays around the school, such as those about the Hall of Fame and British values, provide 'food for thought' for pupils. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is prioritised within the curriculum and is effective.

Governance of the school

- In March, a new chair of the governing body was appointed. He is determined to improve the school. There is some evidence to show that governors do challenge leaders where they have concerns. For example, governors are aware that pupils' behaviour is a concern, but this has not led to strong enough improvement yet.
- Governors have engaged with a local multi-academy trust (MAT) to access the support it can provide. However, too much time has been taken up with governors wishing to formalise joining this MAT as a full member. This has not yet occurred and the indecision has led to a period of inaction where governors have been concentrating on this rather than on the performance of the school.
- Governors have an understanding of the key strengths and areas requiring improvement at the school. 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. This includes how effectively additional funding is being used to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff are well trained. They know their roles in keeping pupils safe and know what actions to take if they have a concern about a pupil's welfare. The culture to keep pupils safe is strong and school leaders and staff know pupils well. Pupils told inspectors they feel safe and almost all parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online survey said that their children feel safe and happy at school.
- All safeguarding policies and procedures are up to date and reflect the latest national guidance. Appropriate checks are made on all staff to make sure they are suitable to work with children. Senior leaders keep detailed records of any concerns that are raised by staff and any subsequent action that is taken.
- Pupils are taught well about issues relating to safer internet use. They are knowledgeable about the risks to their own personal safety because of the information they receive during assemblies and as part of the school's personal and social development (PSD) programme. Staff help pupils to understand the dangers of extremist behaviour and radicalisation.
- The school works closely with parents as well as external agencies to ensure that procedures and practice keep pupils safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Although there is some very effective teaching, there is also variability and inconsistent teaching in the school. Leaders have been successful in establishing a common set of lesson expectations, 'non-negotiables'. However, some teachers do not focus sufficiently on the learning needs of different pupils during lessons. Consequently, some pupils, particularly boys and disadvantaged pupils, do not make good progress

from their starting points.

- There is some high-quality teaching in most subjects but there are currently insufficient opportunities for good practice to be shared. For example, some teachers use questioning very effectively to test pupils' knowledge, but this is not consistent in all lessons.
- Not all teachers have high enough expectations as to what pupils can achieve. Some teachers move on too slowly through a series of tasks which are sometimes at a low and undemanding level. For example, in a science lesson when pupils listened to information about electric circuits at a basic level over a lengthy period of time. As a result, some pupils, especially boys and disadvantaged pupils, lose interest and do not gain the important knowledge or develop a secure understanding of the key concepts or skills they need. Consequently, they do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teaching is effective when relationships are strong, subject knowledge is good and teachers have an accurate understanding of how to make activities lively and interesting. For example, in a Year 9 English lesson, pupils focused on learning about spoken language effectively because all of them were expected to fully participate at a high level. Pupils make good progress when they are actively involved in their learning, teachers ask challenging questions and tasks are modified to support pupils' individual needs.
- Assessment information is gathered regularly and is shared with parents. However, there is some inconsistency in the reliability of the data collected, which means that leaders are not always able to make the best use of this data to intervene when pupils have fallen behind. This is largely due to timings of pupil assessments not matching with whole-school data collection points. Middle leaders are aware of this and are taking steps to rectify it.
- The support provided to pupils with SEND has improved. However, teachers do not routinely plan to meet the additional needs of these pupils. Consequently, they have not achieved as well as their peers, although the school's data indicates that pupils in key stage 3 are making strong progress.
- Pupils receive feedback from teachers in line with the school policy which pupils say is helpful. This is particularly strong in English, where teachers identify the gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. However, too frequently, pupils are not given sufficient time to correct their work or develop greater understanding.
- Pupils generally enjoy their English and history lessons. Pupils know that these lessons are really well planned, and homework activities are clearly linked to their learning. These teachers have higher aspirations and expectations of their pupils than is seen in some other subjects. However, as in some other subjects, English teachers do not always set tasks that make enough demands on pupils or hold their interest, particularly for boys.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils look smart and wear their uniforms correctly. Many care about their work and present their books well, although boys' presentation is frequently not as good as that of girls.
- Many pupils are confident and aware about what it means to be an effective learner. When teachers plan and teach effectively, the small minority of pupils who are not so aware make similar progress to their peers.
- Leaders' work to prevent bullying is effective. Pupils, and most parents, told inspectors that bullying is rare. Staff deal with these uncommon occurrences quickly and effectively.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is a strength because leaders have developed a well-planned programme of assemblies, tutorials and lessons to help pupils reflect on their wider role in modern British society. For example, pupils show a good understanding of diversity and democracy, different faiths and human rights.
- Leaders have made sure that pupils recognise when they are at risk. Pupils know how to get help when they need it. They have learned about online threats and how to take steps to reduce these risks.
- Parents are positive about the care their children receive. Several families wanted to share their stories with inspectors so that we knew about the quality of the school's work to support pupils.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are generally strong. Pupils value the support they receive from adults. Most pupils have positive attitudes to their learning, although a significant minority of boys do not demonstrate this consistently.
- Pupils are particularly praiseworthy of the support they receive for making choices about the next stage in their learning after leaving the school. They value the wide range of information they get, along with the impartial careers guidance. This ensures that almost all pupils moved on to education, employment or training from Year 11 in 2018.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Too many lessons are interrupted by low-level disruption. Pupils say that this is worse at key stage 3 and in lessons where pupils of all abilities are taught together. Staff and pupils both agree that behaviour has improved recently but leaders are aware of the need to rapidly improve this so that disruption to learning in lessons is eradicated.
- Pupils are sociable and generally get on well together. However, inspectors saw some boisterous behaviour at social times that younger pupils, in particular, say they find concerning.
- Leaders have worked hard on improving attendance, which has risen to be just above the national average. It is particularly strong for children looked after. Attendance for disadvantaged pupils has also improved, although it is still less good than for all pupils

overall. The number of pupils who are persistently absent from school has reduced significantly since the previous inspection. Pupils are very aware that the school will pursue unauthorised absence rigorously.

- Rates of exclusion have reduced since the previous inspection and are now below the national averages. There have been no permanent exclusions from the school for the past two years. Leaders have worked hard to ensure that this is an inclusive school.
- Pupils who attend alternative provision are closely monitored. The school makes sure they are safe.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, the progress made by pupils has remained broadly average. However, not enough pupils made strong progress at key stage 4 from their starting points, especially boys. In 2018, Year 11 boys achieved around a grade less on average in each subject they were examined in than girls at the school.
- Current pupils' work shows that they are making stronger progress across a range of subjects at key stage 3. Records provided by the school show that more boys are now learning at a faster rate, particularly at key stage 3. Despite improvement, outcomes remain inconsistent and boys' progress lags behind that of girls with the current Year 10 and 11 pupils.
- The outcomes for disadvantaged pupils were significantly lower than for others nationally across a broad range of subjects in 2018, including in English and mathematics. Information provided by school leaders shows that the attainment for disadvantaged pupils who are currently in the school is improving. However, although there are signs that the difference between these pupils and others is narrowing, these improvements are inconsistent.
- Examination outcomes in English and science remained broadly average in 2018. Those in humanities subjects remained very strong. However, outcomes in mathematics showed an improvement and are now at the national average.
- The progress made by pupils with SEND is improving because of the impact of leaders on developing tailored provision to meet their needs. Staff are now more aware of these pupils' individual requirements, although progress for these pupils is not improving as quickly as it could.
- Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up funding is used effectively to support pupils who enter the school with levels below those typical for their age.
- Pupils who attend alternative provision are attending regularly and are making progress because of the good support they receive.
- As a result of strong advice and guidance, pupils' curriculum choices as they start key stage 4 are appropriate. The vast majority of pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their education or training.

School details

Unique reference number	137931
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10087374

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	823
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Paul Godsmark
Headteacher	Susan Webb
Telephone number	0116 2782388
Website	www.southwigston.leics.sch.uk
Email address	swhs@southwigston.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 May 2017

Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The school receives support from the Learning without Limits Academies Trust.
- The overall responsibility for the school lies with the board of trustees/governors.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The school currently uses seven alternative providers: South Leicestershire Inclusion Partnership, Leicester Partnership School, Willow Bank Day School, First Class Tuition, Vision/Enstruct, Si Sports and Gaz Autos.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 43 parts of lessons, five of which were seen jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors made short visits to tutor time and an assembly.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils at breaktime and lunchtime and as pupils moved around the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised, in detail, a number of pupils' books in a range of subjects.
- Inspectors held a number of meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, the chair of governors and other governors.
- Inspectors spoke with a wide range of pupils from all year groups in meetings, in lessons and around the school at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- The inspection team looked at a wide range of the school's documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance, the school improvement plan, data on pupils' attainment and progress, attendance and behaviour records, safeguarding procedures, evaluations of the quality of teaching and the minutes of the governing body meetings.
- Inspectors took account of the 28 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire, the 26 free-text comments from parents, the 81 responses to the online staff questionnaire, and the 48 responses to the online pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Jamie Clarke, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Annabel Bolt	Ofsted Inspector
Jane Burton	Ofsted Inspector
Vondra Mays	Ofsted Inspector

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