

Wayland Junior Academy Watton

Brandon Road, Watton, Thetford, Norfolk IP25 6AL

Inspection dates

4–5 July 2019

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Over time, leaders, governors and the trust have failed to address declining standards. The trust and the local governing body (LGB) have not worked collectively to challenge leaders over weaker standards since the previous inspection.
- Pupils make inadequate progress across the key stage. By the end of Year 6, attainment is low for all groups of pupils.
- Considerable changes to senior leadership, including the LGB, have brought instability. Current leaders have been in post for a short period of time. Their work to raise standards is still in its infancy.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are weak, especially, but not exclusively, in English and mathematics. Teachers do not take account of pupils' prior knowledge, understanding and skills. Teachers' expectations are too low, and pupils make inadequate progress.
- Teachers do not challenge pupils about the quality of their written work. The teaching of writing is weak. Often, work that is untidy or illegible is not picked up by teachers. Pupils make inadequate progress in writing.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) underachieve in most year groups from their varied starting points.
- Teachers fail to tackle inappropriate behaviour. Pupils' attitudes to learning are poor in too many lessons.
- Leaders, the LGB and the trust have not had sufficient impact on developing a suitably broad and rich curriculum. Pupils are not provided with the depth and breadth of learning experiences they need to achieve well.
- The trust and LGB do not have strategic oversight about what needs improving in the school's specialist resource base.

The school has the following strengths

- Recent changes in the school's leadership have improved the day-to-day running of the school.
- Leaders have ensured that the most vulnerable pupils are having specific support, which is enabling them to have increased confidence and feel safe.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Urgently eradicate the inadequacies in governance by ensuring that the trust and the LGB:
 - establish consistent leadership capability and capacity at all levels to support the work of the new interim headteacher in sustainably raising standards
 - challenge leaders about the quality of the school's work
 - hold leaders to account for pupils' progress and attainment across the school
 - check that additional funding is being used effectively to improve provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND in all year groups
 - increase and improve oversight of the provision in the school's specialist resource base.
- Rapidly improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment thoroughly to check that teaching meets the needs and abilities of pupils so that they make good progress and attain well
 - ensuring that leaders have a secure understanding about what assessment information tells them, so that they can act swiftly to support pupils who are not fulfilling their potential
 - developing the curriculum, in both the core and wider curriculum subjects, so that it is well planned, builds on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding, meets the needs and interests of pupils and enables them to achieve well
 - analysing behaviour and bullying incidents to detect trends, and taking action to reduce poor behaviour.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and raise achievement by ensuring that:
 - teachers assess pupils' learning accurately and set work which enables them to make swift progress
 - teachers use assessment information to set high expectations for what pupils can and should be achieving
 - teachers plan learning over time that enables pupils to develop their skills and knowledge and apply these to their wider learning, including the most able, disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND

- pupils’ reading, writing and mathematics knowledge and skills are developed across a range of subjects
 - pupils have frequent opportunities to develop and deepen their skills in writing in a range of subjects and genres
 - all teachers insist on high standards of presentation in pupils’ work, and tackle errors and misconceptions at the earliest opportunity.
- Eradicate inadequacies in behaviour at the school by:
- ensuring that staff apply the agreed school behaviour policy consistently
 - increasing adults’ expectations about how pupils should behave
 - improving the school’s systems of recording and acting upon concerns about bullying, so that pupils are confident in the school’s ability to tackle it.

Inspectors recommend that an external review of the use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspectors recommend that an external review of governance should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspectors recommend that the school should not employ newly qualified teachers (NQTs).

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- The LGB and the trust have failed to strengthen leadership capacity since the previous inspection. Instability in leadership has compounded a decline in standards and weaknesses in teaching. Pupils, including the most able, disadvantaged pupils and those pupils with SEND, make too little progress. Leaders, including the LGB and the trust, have not been successful in halting the decline in standards.
- While the new interim principal and interim executive principal have a good understanding of the weaknesses in the school provision, they are not well supported by other leaders, the LGB and the trust to bring about the rapid improvements required. There is no shared understanding among leaders about the urgent issues. Actions to bring about improvement are implemented too slowly.
- The curriculum is weak. It does not build on pupils' prior knowledge and skills. It does not enable pupils to develop a breadth of understanding in a range of subjects. Staff do not have strong subject knowledge across the range of subjects, which hampers pupils' progress across all areas of the curriculum.
- Subject leaders do not have a clear understanding of the quality of teaching or the progress of pupils in their curriculum areas.
- The newly appointed interim principal has identified that the provision for pupils with SEND is weak. An experienced teacher of special educational needs has been appointed as the coordinator (SENCo) and has started to support pupils with the most complex needs. However, the provision for most pupils with SEND is still ineffective. Current pupils with SEND have made too little progress from their starting points.
- Parents and carers have mixed views about the school. While many feel that the interim principal has brought improvements, many also feel that the communication of leaders is weak and have concerns about the quality of education that their children receive.
- Several staff responded to the Ofsted questionnaire; all responses were positive. All staff enjoy working at the school. However, some staff have concerns regarding staffing changes and the fact that the new principal is only interim. They worry about the long-term stability of the school.
- The physical education (PE) and sport funding is used effectively to ensure that all pupils can take part in a range of physical activities in PE lessons, and at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported appropriately. Pupils are able to talk about respect and democracy. When asked about people with different faiths, cultures or family backgrounds one pupil said, 'We are all different and that's fine.' Pupils take part in celebration assemblies, and Year 6 pupils organised the school's summer fair showing excitement and interest in the activity.
- The new interim principal is passionate that pupils should have a good-quality education. She has a 'no-nonsense' attitude to identifying weaknesses and trying to address them. She has quickly implemented much-needed systems to support school

improvement, but the work is still in its early stages.

- The day-to-day provision for the pupils who attend the school's specialist resource base is improving. Pupils learn and behave well, and enjoy attending. The new leader is attempting to address weaknesses in assessment and transition for the pupils when they return to their home schools. However, there is a lack of strategic support from the LGB and the trust to improve the quality of the specialist provision.
- Inspectors recommend that the school should not employ NQTs.

Governance of the school

- The LGB and the trust do not have an accurate view of the school. They rely too heavily on data given by school leaders and do not check its accuracy. They do not challenge leaders sufficiently to stem the continued decline in standards.
- The LGB and the trust have been too slow to respond to the decline in the school's performance. Although they recognise that pupils' outcomes have been deteriorating, governors' challenge to leaders has not been effective. The LGB has not taken effective action to secure improved outcomes for pupils.
- Governors do not monitor effectively the impact of additional funding received for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. They know that pupils' outcomes are not good enough and that differences remain too wide between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others nationally, but have not challenged leaders sufficiently to detect why.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders carry out the required checks to ensure that staff, governors and volunteers are suitable people to work with children.
- All staff are up-to-date with safeguarding procedures, including those who have recently joined the school. Staff know the procedures to follow should they have a concern about the safety or welfare of pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Over time, inconsistent leadership, staffing and a lack of accountability have contributed to inadequate teaching, learning and assessment. Consequently, pupils' progress across the school is extremely poor.
- Pupils throughout the school have too many gaps in their learning from previous years. They are spending too much time catching up and therefore they are not making sufficient progress or attaining at the expected standard for their age.
- Sequences of lessons are not planned well enough. There is a lack of a structured curriculum within and between subjects, which results in pupils learning new concepts and content in isolation, rarely deepening their understanding before they move on to something new.
- Teachers do not check pupils' learning in lessons carefully enough. This means that

work does not build on what pupils already know, can do and understand. Too often, pupils work on the same or similar activities because they have chosen it themselves, without it having a positive impact on their learning. Many pupils told inspectors that teachers do not check on what they are doing.

- Teachers' planning does not meet the needs of all pupils, including the most able. In lessons, the activities many pupils are given are far too easy for them. Teachers do not recognise that some pupils are capable of much more. Too often, pupils are made to wait for other pupils to complete tasks before they move on to the next task. In particular, the most able pupils do not attain well or make the progress they should.
- Low expectations are common. Pupils are content to present teachers with poor-quality work because teachers do not insist on high standards. Pupils' work in books is untidy and contains frequent errors, particularly in spelling, punctuation and grammar. These errors are rarely highlighted by teachers and therefore mistakes continue to be made.
- Pupils say that they do not know how to improve their work. Teachers do not provide them with sufficient feedback to help them to further develop skills and knowledge. As a result of insufficient support, pupils are working at a superficial level, which weakens their progress.
- The teaching of mathematics is too inconsistent. Even when teachers are using more effective modelling and appropriate mathematical language, pupils lack basic skills and cannot work independently to apply any new knowledge. Teachers do not address misconceptions, which further reduces pupils' ability to apply mathematical knowledge accurately and independently.
- The teaching of writing is weak. Expectations are not high enough. There are too few occasions for pupils to apply their writing skills in a variety of genres and subjects, which limits pupils' progress.
- Pupils say they enjoy reading; they especially like the library where they can choose books to read both at home and in school. When hearing readers, inspectors found that lower-ability pupils did not have strategies to read unfamiliar words and their reading fluency was weak. They did not understand enough about what they were reading.
- The quality of adult support varies too much. In some instances, teaching assistants support pupils' learning well, use effective questioning to move learning on or support more vulnerable pupils to engage in lessons. However, the support is not consistent enough.
- Frequently, pupils are not engaged, motivated or challenged by the activities and tasks they are given. Some pupils lose interest in their learning when activities are either too difficult or lack challenge. Low-level disruption is commonplace. Teachers do not deal with low-level disruption well enough, and this hinders pupils' learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.

- Pupils are polite, friendly and welcoming. Most are respectful and considerate towards other pupils and adults.
- Pupils readily take on additional responsibility, such as the 'Golden Guardians' who look after other pupils during lunchtime and break. These responsibilities add to pupils' levels of independence and enable them to make a positive contribution to school life.
- Leaders have ensured that there are specific activities and support for more vulnerable pupils. These include a lunchtime club and a variety of external interventions including art therapy.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils and parents understand the importance of good attendance. As a result, pupils' attendance is improving and is regularly above the national average.
- Most pupils spoken to say they feel safe in school, they know what to do if they are worried about something and they say that they have been shown how to stay safe online.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- A culture of appropriate learning behaviour is not well established. There are too many instances of low-level disruption through the majority of lessons, which at times means that classrooms are disorderly, and learning does not take place.
- Teachers do not tackle inappropriate behaviour systematically. When they do challenge pupils' behaviour, some pupils do not respond quickly and show a lack of respect in responding to teachers' instructions.
- Leaders and teachers have not taken sufficient steps to encourage pupils' positive attitudes to their education. Teaching does not inspire pupils to aim high and challenge themselves. Limited opportunities are provided to promote pupils' independence. Pupils do not take enough pride in their learning or achievements.
- Leaders address any concerns that are raised with them about bullying. A few pupils and parents are concerned about bullying. They do not feel that bullying is dealt with consistently well by staff and school leaders. Leaders do not routinely record all complaints about bullying, so do not have an overview about the extent of the issue.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- For too long, pupils have underachieved. They attain standards which are well below national averages by the end of key stage 2. As a result, pupils are not well prepared for their move to secondary school.
- For the last three years, pupils' progress and attainment at the end of key stage 2 have been poor in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2018, only 40% of pupils met the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined, which was well below the national figure. The school sits in the bottom 10% of all schools for progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The progress of current pupils in writing and mathematics, although improving

marginally, is still too weak. Pupils are not catching up quickly enough due to the gaps in their learning.

- Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, the most able pupils and pupils with SEND are particularly poor. Many pupils made very weak progress from their starting points. Very few of the pupils have reached the standards that they are capable of in reading, writing or mathematics over the last three years.

School details

Unique reference number	140680
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10088680

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	266
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Jim McAtear
Headteacher	Izzy Mair (interim principal)
Telephone number	01953 881 387
Website	www.wjaw.org.uk
Email address	office@watton.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26–27 January 2017

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized junior school.
- The school is in the Norfolk Academies, part of the TEN group. The overall governance sits with the board of trustees of the academy trust, and the academy has a local governing body.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is in line with the national average.

- Some pupils with SEND receive part-time support in the school's specialist resource base for learning and cognition. The provision is managed by the school and funded by the local authority.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in every class and attended a whole-school assembly. Most of the observations were carried out jointly with the senior leadership team.
- An inspector visited the specialist resource base jointly with a member of the senior leadership team.
- A wide range of pupils' books and work were looked at by inspectors throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors held meetings with the interim principal, deputy headteacher, subject leaders, the SENCo, the teacher at the specialist resource base, the newly qualified teacher, three governors, including the chair of the academy council, and the chief executive officer of the trust.
- Inspectors held telephone meetings with the chair of the academy trust and the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors met groups of pupils to talk formally about their views of the school.
- Inspectors talked to pupils informally in lessons and at lunchtime and breaktimes about school life.
- Inspectors heard some pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 read. Inspectors talked to pupils about their reading.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's website and a range of school documents including: assessment information; minutes from governors' meetings; the school's own evaluation of its work; improvement plans; and records about behaviour, safeguarding children and attendance.
- Inspectors considered the 20 free-text comments from parents and 21 responses made by parents to the Ofsted online Parent View questionnaire. They also considered the responses to the school's own parent questionnaires. Inspectors spoke to some parents before school at the beginning of the inspection, and during the inspection.
- Inspectors considered the 19 views expressed by members of staff in response to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Samantha Stewart, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector
Jo Nutbeam	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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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