

Inspection of LWS Academy

Montefiore Drive, Sarisbury Green, Southampton, Hampshire SO31 7NL

Inspection dates: 24–25 September 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel happy and safe at LWS. They like the school because staff care about them. Pupils feel that staff help them to cope with their social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs so that they have a better chance of doing well in the outside world. Pupils say that staff are quick to help if there are any issues such as bullying. Relationships between staff and pupils are typically positive and respectful.

Leaders have made sure that the school is a much calmer place than it used to be. Pupils like the 'ready to learn' room where they can refocus if they need to. They say that this has helped classrooms to be more settled and purposeful. Pupils take a wider range of GCSEs and other qualifications than previously. Most gain a college place when they leave the school. However, leaders have not thought carefully enough about how to help pupils who are behind to learn the basic skills they need to be able to read and write well.

Pupils enjoy a range of clubs and activities at breaktime such as art club and football club. They appreciate the regular trips, for example a visit to a local castle or to Parliament.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

This school has improved since its last inspection. Staff are skilled at using the information in pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans to decide how best to help pupils manage their SEMH needs. Consequently, pupils typically behave well in school. Staff recognise that several pupils have had difficult experiences of education before they join the school. They have worked well with families so that they now have a much better understanding of the difficulties that some pupils face in coming to school. This is helping staff to tailor the help they provide, so that pupils are starting to attend more regularly. Once in school, adults provide strong support which helps pupils to be ready to enter classrooms and learn.

Leaders have raised their expectations of what pupils can achieve by the time they leave school. Pupils study a range of academic and vocational subjects. They are expected to take GCSEs and other useful qualifications. More broadly, pupils are helped to understand the world they live in, for example by discussing the news and local issues. They are encouraged to think about what they want to do in the future and several pupils spend part of their week attending college courses. Pupils spoke proudly of how the school has helped them to feel confident enough to take their first steps towards independence.

Teachers typically think carefully about how to plan and structure the curriculum so that pupils understand and enjoy learning in the subjects they study. This is much better at key stage 4 and is helping older pupils to achieve more highly. However, at key stage 3 some subjects are not organised well enough to build up pupils' knowledge over time. Sometimes, pupils' EHC plans are not used carefully enough to help pupils to learn better.

Leaders know they need to focus more on improving pupils' reading, writing and spelling skills. Teachers introduce pupils to new words and give them the opportunity to practise their understanding of what they are reading. However, there is not yet a thorough and organised approach across the school. In particular, pupils with very low reading, writing and spelling skills are not helped to catch up quickly enough. This limits the progress they can make when learning other subjects and is not helping to prepare them well enough for future success in life.

Leaders are well placed to make the further improvements needed in the school. Leaders, trustees, governors and staff all want what is best for pupils. Staff feel exceptionally well supported by leaders. They appreciate the training they receive which helps them to understand how to manage pupils' different needs. They are proud to work at LWS.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff prioritise pupils' safety in everything they do. They are sharply aware of pupils' individual needs and problems and put plans in place which help to prevent pupils coming to harm. They seek extra help from other agencies when they need to. In school, the proper recruitment checks are made and all staff receive regular training and updates in safeguarding. Concerns are reported and acted on promptly. Safeguarding policies are up to date and records well kept. Pupils are taught to understand how to keep themselves safe, including in their communities and when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils' learning at key stage 3 is not sequenced coherently. Teachers should ensure that curriculum plans contain the knowledge that pupils should know and the order in which they should learn it.
- Although teachers use the information in pupils' EHC plans to support pupils' SEMH needs very well, it is not always used sharply enough to identify how best to help them learn the curriculum, including in learning to read.
- Much work has begun to improve pupils' literacy skills. However, there is not a systematic approach to help pupils to catch up quickly with their reading, writing and spelling skills. Adults need to identify more precisely individual pupils' specific literacy needs. A sharper focus on reading, including on teaching pupils to read, will help them to be better prepared for future life and learning.
- Leaders recognise that pupils' attendance is not strong enough. They have started to unpick the reasons for this for individual pupils. They have begun to improve pupils' attendance, for example through establishing close links with families and using support from outside agencies well. Leaders now must embed

the measures already in place, and evaluate the impact of their actions, to help further reduce pupils' rates of absence.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

| | |
|--|--|
| Unique reference number | 140732 |
| Local authority | Hampshire |
| Inspection number | 10053593 |
| Type of school | Special |
| School category | Academy special converter |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 16 |
| Gender of pupils | Boys |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 58 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Paul Lane |
| Headteacher | Stuart Parker-Tyreman (Executive Headteacher), Christopher Berry (Associate Headteacher) |
| Website | http://lordwilson.org.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 23 May and 13 June 2017 |

Information about this school

- LWS Academy is a special school which caters for boys aged between 11 and 16 years.
- LWS Academy provides for pupils who have social and emotional and mental health needs. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school makes use of the following alternative provision: Motiv8, Bike Recycling, Oarsome Chance, Southdowns College and Youth Options.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We held meetings with trustees, local governors, the chief executive officer for the trust, senior leaders, teachers and a group of support staff.
- We evaluated the quality of education by looking in detail at the teaching of English, mathematics and food technology. We discussed curriculum design with senior leaders, looked at curriculum documents, spoke with leaders for these subjects, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils and teachers

about the curriculum. We also visited lessons in further subjects, spoke to teachers and looked at their planning to explore how well pupils' literacy was being developed across the curriculum.

- We carried out a range of checks on the school's arrangements for safeguarding. We held conversations with leaders, including those with designated responsibility for safeguarding. We also explored the knowledge and understanding of other staff. We observed staff briefings in the morning and afternoon where pupils' safeguarding is discussed. We spoke with pupils about how the school helps to keep pupils safe. We reviewed a range of the school's records to test out how the school safeguards pupils in practice. We spoke to a representative from the local authority about the experiences of specific individuals. We checked the single central record of the suitability of adults to work with children. We carried out a site walk to check how leaders keep pupils safe on the school site.
- We considered the responses to our inspection surveys completed by parents and staff. We talked informally to pupils and staff during the inspection. We met with a small group of pupils to talk about their work and their general experiences and opinions of the school.
- We observed the daily life of the school beyond lessons, inside and out.

Inspection team

Catherine Old, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Hugh Betterton

Ofsted Inspector

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 <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019