

Inspection of Lees Brook Community School

Morley Road, Chaddesden, Derby, Derbyshire DE21 4QX

Inspection dates: 5–6 November 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Sixth-form provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a welcoming and inclusive school. Pupils are happy. They say they are well looked after and feel safe. They appreciate the extra help and support they receive from their teachers. Pupils value the many opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activities.

Most pupils report that incidents of bullying are low. They feel confident that staff deal with incidents of bullying quickly. Pupils know who they can talk to about any worries they may have. They like the new system of rewards for good effort. Most pupils generally behave well in lessons and around the school. However, some pupils do not always behave well, sometimes disrupting learning for others. The school is very busy during social times. Movement around the school can be uncomfortable, particularly in the corridors.

Leaders are committed to helping pupils achieve their best. Teachers care about pupils' achievement and their well-being. Relationships are positive. There is more to do to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can.

Students who attend the school's 'Skills Academy' in key stage 5 are thriving. This centre is well regarded in the community. Students study courses which meet their specific needs and interests. They achieve well.

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

Leaders have established a collaborative and inclusive culture. Morale is good. Staff and pupils enjoy being at the school. Leaders are beginning to improve the quality of education. They recognise that pupils' achievement is improving in some subjects more quickly than in others.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is ambitious. Pupils study a broad range of subjects in key stages 3 and 4. In key stage 4, leaders have increased the number of optional subjects pupils can choose. Leaders have ensured that the subjects pupils study meet their needs and aspirations. These include vocational subjects such as construction and engineering.

Standards are rising. Pupils, parents and carers say they appreciate the support they receive. Some teaching in key stage 3 does not always prepare pupils well enough for key stage 4. Teachers' expectations are not always high enough, especially for boys and disadvantaged pupils. In some classes, teachers do not challenge pupils when work is left incomplete or is poorly presented. Pupils say that their enjoyment of learning depends on which teacher they have. Not all staff apply the behaviour policy consistently.

Leaders assess and identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. The additional support these pupils receive is well coordinated. However, not all teachers adapt their plans to meet these pupils' needs

in the classroom.

Pupils, parents and staff agree that standards of pupils' behaviour have improved over the last three years. Attendance has improved. Most pupils conduct themselves well in lessons. Not all are as motivated as they should be, particularly boys and disadvantaged pupils. This leads to incidents of low-level disruption which affect the enjoyment of learning for others. Fixed-term exclusions are reducing but remain high.

Leaders promote pupils' personal development well. There is a well-planned programme for careers education across all year groups. Pupils can see how this guidance has helped them to prepare for future education and employment. The school's citizenship course ensures that pupils learn about healthy living and keeping safe. For example, they learn about mental health, online safety, knife crime and gang culture. Pupils describe the school's extra-curricular programme as 'the best in the area'. They value the broad range of activities offered, which support their spiritual, social and moral development well. These activities include sports, dance, forensic science and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Pupils' understanding of different cultures is less well developed.

Students in the sixth-form 'Skills Academy' are thriving. They enjoy their learning and work hard. They value the opportunities to study vocational qualifications which meet their needs and aspirations. The curriculum is precisely tailored to meet students' specific and often complex needs. The learning facilities are excellent. Staff care passionately about students' enjoyment of learning and their success. Expectations are high and students respond positively to this. They achieve well. Students are well prepared for their next steps. They receive high-quality careers guidance and enjoy meaningful experiences of the world of work, such as meeting employers from different fields.

The headteacher and senior leaders, together with governors, recognise the progress that has been made in improving aspects of the school. They are realistic about what still needs to be done to ensure that there is ambition for all pupils across the curriculum and that all pupils behave well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders complete all the required checks to ensure that adults working in the school are suitable to work with young people. Staff know pupils well and act quickly when concerns arise. Leaders work well with other agencies to keep vulnerable pupils safe from harm. Record-keeping is thorough. Leaders ensure that pupils learn how to stay safe. For example, pupils learn about online safety and knife crime. Leaders ensure that appropriate action is taken when necessary to protect pupils' safety, including when concerns arise about the conduct of adults.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high enough. Senior leaders, together with subject leaders, should ensure that the curriculum is equally ambitious for all pupils so that all pupils achieve as well as they are able across the curriculum.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Low expectations and a patchy curriculum in some subjects mean that these pupils are not well prepared for key stage 4. Teaching does not consistently ensure that these pupils receive and use the knowledge they need to succeed. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is implemented in such a way that disadvantaged pupils acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to achieve well.
- The academic support for pupils with SEND is not always given the priority it needs. Needs are well identified, and information is shared, but this is not always acted on. Leaders need to ensure that teaching meets the needs of these pupils by adapting their curriculum appropriately.
- Staff and parents recognise that the school is improving. They also recognise that standards of behaviour are improving. However, there are pockets of anti-social behaviour and incidents of low-level disruption from a small number of pupils. This is to the frustration of other pupils. Leaders need to ensure that staff are more consistent in their application of the school's behaviour management policy. Leaders also need to ensure that all pupils respect and follow the school's expectations about their conduct.

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	143934
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	10104892
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,120
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	59
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Tim Gallimore
Headteacher	Zoe House
Website	www.leesbrook.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Lees Brook Community School joined The Northworthy Trust in January 2017. When its predecessor school, Lees Brook Community School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement overall.
- The school's post-16 provision, 'The Skills Academy', offers a range of vocational courses, mostly at levels 1 and 2. Many of the students who attend this provision have high-level needs.
- The school uses one alternative education provider, Derby Pride Academy. In addition, the school provides an on-site alternative education facility, 'Lees Brook Hall', for a small number of pupils.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team. Meetings were also held with the leaders for the sixth form, the provision for pupils with SEND and alternative provision.
- An inspector met with the school's designated leaders for safeguarding to evaluate the school's policies, procedures and record-keeping. This included a review of the school's single central register and the school's processes for recruiting staff.
- Inspectors met with two groups of staff, including a group of newly qualified teachers.
- Meetings were also held with the chair of the local governing body and with the chief executive officer of the trust.
- The subjects that were considered in depth as part of this inspection were English, mathematics, science, geography and expressive arts. In each subject, inspectors visited lessons, scrutinised the work in pupils' books and held discussions with subject leaders, teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors met with several groups of pupils, including students in the sixth form.
- Inspectors considered the 64 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, including 46 free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the 33 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Chris Stevens, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Christine Horrocks	Ofsted Inspector
Laurence Reilly	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Wilson	Ofsted Inspector
Sally Wicken	Ofsted Inspector

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