

Inspection of Lawn Manor Academy

Salcombe Grove, Swindon SN3 1ER

Inspection dates: 21–22 January 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, parents and staff say the school has 'transformed' over the last few years. Pupils behave well, and they know they will be able to learn without disruption. They are proud to attend Lawn Manor Academy.

Pupils feel safe. The strong pastoral system supports pupils well. Pupils say that there is always someone they can go to for help or advice. Although bullying is infrequent, pupils are confident that it is dealt with quickly. New arrivals to the school say that they feel welcomed and settle in quickly. Pupils are tolerant and keen to find out about each other's cultures and traditions.

In some subjects, pupils do not learn as much as they could. The way the curriculum is planned means that pupils do not always know and then remember enough of what they are taught. The attendance of some pupils is not as high as it should be, and this affects how much they learn.

Younger pupils enjoy the school's reading programmes. They say that it encourages them to read more. The school provides a wealth of opportunities for pupils to develop their interests and talents. Many pupils play table tennis and basketball, whereas others choreograph dance shows, are trained librarians, or coach their peers.

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

The headteacher and her senior team are ambitious for all pupils at Lawn Manor and determined to improve the school further. They and the governing board have a clear vision for improvement. Leaders have been successful in creating a safe and purposeful learning environment.

Leaders are committed to improving the school's curriculum. The current curriculum is not rich and broad enough for as long as possible. Some subjects have omitted important knowledge to fit content into the time available in key stage 3. For example, pupils do not learn about important events such as the Second World War and the Holocaust. Leaders have structured plans to improve the curriculum for the next academic year.

Pupils learn well in subjects where teachers thoughtfully select content and appropriate activities. In science, teachers provide pupils with the right building blocks so that they know more over time. However, in history and geography, teaching does not always help pupils to understand or recall important concepts. In history, pupils could recall an activity but not its purpose or the knowledge they needed to learn. Pupils have less depth of knowledge when this occurs.

Most teaching communicates clear expectations to pupils about the quality of work expected of them. When this happens, pupils' work is usually detailed and complete. However, this is not universally the case and at times pupils do not

always finish their work. This can lead to gaps in knowledge. This is most pronounced in history. In English, the school's chosen approach to teaching does not ensure that all pupils develop the building blocks of knowledge they need to learn more.

Leaders have put strategies in place to improve attendance. These are having some impact. Pupils know the importance of attending well. However, attendance is still too low. After an absence, teachers do not always expect or check that pupils catch up on work. As a result, these pupils have gaps in their knowledge.

The help provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is coordinated effectively. Pupils appreciate the 'connect' programme that helps them to access the curriculum and become more confident. Teachers are provided with information on how to help these pupils in the classroom. However, they do not use this systematically to support pupils with SEND to develop their knowledge.

The school is developing the character of pupils well through its own ILEARN programme. Many pupils, including those with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, participate in the school's enrichment programme. Pupils learn about keeping themselves safe, including online, healthy relationships and mental and physical well-being during personal development days. However, the curriculum structure sometimes limits older pupils' opportunities to develop an understanding of different beliefs and democracy.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained. They spot issues quickly and use the school's systems effectively.

The school has a knowledgeable and skilled safeguarding team. It has many challenging cases to deal with and does this effectively. Team members specialise in key areas and this helps them to better support vulnerable pupils with their complex needs. Staff work creatively to find solutions when there are gaps in external provision. They are tenacious in their pursuit of help for pupils and their families.

Leaders and governors have a good understanding of safer recruitment, prevent and the local issues that affect their pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have rightly identified attendance as an area for improvement. They have put strategies in place to improve this. Although there has been some

improvement, absence and persistent absence remain higher than the school would like. The school needs to persist with its strategies and work closely with families to enable them to understand the importance of regular attendance.

- The school does not have a clear strategy to support pupils to catch up with missed learning if they have been absent for a short time. If pupils miss a personal development day or subject time, they have important gaps in their knowledge. The school should help pupils to plug knowledge these gaps, so they do not have an impact on their learning as they progress through the curriculum.
- The curriculum is not yet fully developed in a number of key areas. The school needs to make sure that the new curriculum is well planned and implemented in all subjects. Weaker subject areas need to be supported to develop a logical and well-sequenced curriculum that builds on previous learning. This will help pupils to have more secure knowledge.
- Leaders have identified pedagogy that they believe is most useful. However, it is not used well across all subjects. Some teachers need guidance on how to use classroom activities well so that their pupils know, understand and remember more.

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 are the school and you are 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	144773
Local authority	Swindon
Inspection number	10122391
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	819
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Marion Sweet
Headteacher	Sandra Muir
Website	www.lawnmanor.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Lawn Manor Academy opened in May 2017. It is a member of the Royal Wootton Bassett Academy Trust.
- The school uses alternative provision at Education Other Than At School (EOTAS), which includes the Oakfield Project and the Riverside Centre. It also uses New College.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors met with the chair of the trust, the CEO, the chair of the local governing board and governors. Inspectors also met with the headteacher, senior leaders, curriculum leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: English, geography, history and science. Inspectors visited lessons, met with staff, looked at pupils' work, talked with pupils, interviewed curriculum leaders and examined documentation.

- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead and the deputy designated safeguarding lead. The inspection team talked with a range of staff about safeguarding training. Inspectors examined documentation and school records.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils to discuss their views about the school. Inspectors considered 27 responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Parent View.

Inspection team

Tracey Reynolds, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Tracy Harris	Ofsted Inspector
Jonathan Jones	Ofsted Inspector
Kirsten Harrison	Ofsted Inspector
Gill Hickling	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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