

# Inspection of Dean Trust Wigan

Greenhey, Orrell, Wigan, Greater Manchester WN5 0DQ

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Inspection dates: 12–13 February 2020

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Inadequate**

Personal development

**Inadequate**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5  
of the Education Act 2005

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

The pupils that we spoke with told us that they feel safe and that if they report bullying, staff deal with it. However, many pupils told us that discriminatory language, for example regarding sexual orientation, is frequent. More worryingly, they accept this as the norm. Many pupils do not report this offensive language to staff. Leaders have not ensured that the school is a respectful community.

Some pupils do not behave sensibly. Younger pupils reported pushing and shoving on the corridors. Pupils told us that the behaviour of a small proportion of pupils at social times is particularly disorderly.

Too often, pupils' learning is disrupted by the behaviour of others. Many teachers have high expectations of pupils. That said, in some classes, the conduct of some pupils is repeatedly troublesome, and some teachers do not challenge this behaviour. There is a high proportion of pupils who are excluded from school.

Many pupils who attend the school are polite. They enjoy the wide variety of clubs on offer, such as football and musical theatre.

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

Leaders are not doing enough to tackle the unacceptable and derogatory language that some pupils use. This means that discriminatory language is used frequently by some pupils. While pupils are confident that staff listen to their concerns, many choose not to report harmful name-calling. Leaders have not ensured that pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain.

Pupils do not benefit from a coherently planned personal development curriculum. This curriculum is delivered through a variety of different ways. Leaders do not check that some important aspects of this curriculum are delivered well. Some staff have not received appropriate training to deliver this content effectively.

Pupils do not attend school often enough. This is especially the case for pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. A very high proportion of disadvantaged pupils are absent from school regularly. This means that too many pupils often miss out on their learning.

Leaders have secured some improvements to the quality of education for pupils. This is particularly the case in science, where pupils' achievement has improved considerably. Many subject leaders have thought carefully about the order in which teachers deliver different topics. For example, in mathematics pupils use their understanding of percentages to answer more difficult questions. In geography, pupils use their knowledge of plate tectonics to explain the benefits of living near a volcano.

Many teachers have an expert knowledge of their subject to deliver curriculums effectively. Even so, pupils have been unable to benefit from challenging and well-planned curriculums until more recently. Older pupils do not have some of the necessary knowledge that they need for future learning. This is because these pupils were unable to benefit from demanding and carefully planned curriculums in key stage 3. As a result, they do not achieve well in many of their GCSE examinations, including in English and mathematics.

Leaders have redesigned the curriculum offer so that, where appropriate, more pupils take the English Baccalaureate. For example, more pupils are choosing to study French at key stage 4. With support from the trust, subject leaders have ensured that curriculums are as ambitious as the national curriculum. For example, in English at key stage 3, pupils study a broad range of ambitious texts.

Leaders ensure that teachers have appropriate information about pupils with SEND. Some teachers use this well to adapt the curriculum for this group of pupils. In English, for example, staff provide appropriate resources for pupils with SEND based on what they know about the learning needs of these pupils. However, this is not done consistently well across subjects and year groups. Pupils with SEND are more likely to be absent or excluded from school for incidents of poor behaviour than their peers.

Although many subject curriculums are developed well, for some pupils, the behaviour of others prevents them from learning. A high proportion of pupils are excluded from school. This is especially the case for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. There are some early signs that pupils' behaviour is starting to improve. However, some teachers have lost confidence in the systems to manage pupils' conduct. Pupils explained to us that they are frustrated by the persistent poor behaviour of some of their peers.

There are a wide range of clubs and activities on offer for pupils at lunchtimes and after school. Leaders use a variety of carefully selected approaches for pupils to learn about careers. Nearly all pupils progress to further education, employment or training.

Those staff that we spoke with say that leaders are considerate of their workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders complete all the necessary checks to make sure that adults are safe to work with pupils before they take up their posts. Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They understand the procedures they should follow if they have concerns about a pupil. Leaders make sure that those pupils who attend alternative provision are safe. Similarly, they carry out appropriate checks to make sure that the high number of pupils who are absent from school are safe.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not created a culture in which people's differences are valued. Pupils' use of prejudiced language, particularly regarding sexual orientation, is commonplace. Leaders must make pupils' personal development a higher priority and plan this curriculum carefully so that respect for diversity is regarded highly by pupils. This will help to ensure that they are better prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' attendance is far too low. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. This means that many pupils often miss out on their learning. Leaders must act to ensure that pupils attend school regularly.
- Too many pupils have their learning disrupted by poor behaviour. This has resulted in a high proportion of pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, being excluded from school. Pupils' weaker behaviour prevents some teachers from delivering the curriculum effectively. Leaders must take urgent action to ensure that pupils can regulate their own behaviour. Leaders must also help teachers to better manage pupils' behaviour and create classroom environments where pupils can learn.
- Leaders have not ensured that some staff have the confidence and knowledge to deliver aspects of the personal development curriculum effectively. This means that some important aspects are not delivered well. Leaders must ensure that staff can benefit from appropriate training in this aspect of the school's provision. This will improve the opportunities that pupils receive to develop as well-rounded and respectful members of society.
- Leaders have not ensured that some teachers adapt the curriculum effectively for pupils with SEND. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not achieve well. Leaders must ensure that teachers use the information that they hold about pupils' needs more effectively so that pupils with SEND learn as well as they should.
- Subject leaders have thought carefully about the order in which the curriculum is delivered. However, many older pupils do not have the necessary prior knowledge they need. This prevents them from applying their learning to more difficult tasks. Leaders must ensure that teachers identify and address the gaps in pupils' knowledge so that they remember more and achieve well in their GCSE examinations.

## 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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 144519   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Wigan  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10121928   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Secondary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Academy sponsor-led  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 11 to 16   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 722  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | Board of trustees  |
| <b>Chair of trust</b>                      | Damian McGann  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Paul Bousfield   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.deantrustwigan.co.uk">www.deantrustwigan.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | Not previously inspected   |

## Information about this school

- This school is part of The Dean Trust. The school joined the trust in April 2017.
- The school uses alternative provision for a small number of pupils at: Progress Schools, Wigan; Three Towers Alternative Provision Academy; Fir Tree Fishery and FixIt.

## Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- During the inspection, we spoke with pupils, staff, subject leaders and senior leaders. As the lead inspector, I spoke with the chair of the local governing body and the trust's chief executive officer.

- We considered a range of school documents, including leaders' assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses. We also considered leaders' information about pupils' attendance, behaviour and exclusions.
- We spoke with representatives of one of the alternative providers used by the school. We checked on safeguarding documentation, including leaders' appointment checks on staff.
- We considered 47 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff and 49 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for pupils. We considered the views expressed by parents and carers in the 25 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including the comments received via Ofsted's free-text facility.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: geography, mathematics, French and science. We spoke with pupils, teaching staff and subject leaders. We visited lessons and checked on pupils' work. Other subjects were also considered as part of this inspection, including design and technology and English.

### **Inspection team**

|                              |                         |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Emma Gregory, lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Alyson Middlemass            | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Mike Pennington              | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Linda Jones                  | Ofsted Inspector        |

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