

Inspection of De Warenne Academy

Gardens Lane, Conisbrough, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN12 3JY

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 October 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at De Warenne Academy feel happy and safe at school. They are respectful and kind towards one another. They told inspectors that bullying is rare.

Staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Relationships between staff and adults are positive. Staff know and value pupils as individuals. Pupils trust adults who work in the school and seek their help if they have any problems. Pupils told us that they are confident that staff will help them if they have any issues.

Pupils behave in lessons and engage with their learning. They value education and recognise the opportunities it will give them in the future. Pupils receive excellent information about careers. They enjoy the range of wider opportunities they are given by the school. Pupils also appreciate opportunities to discuss and debate important issues in lessons.

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

In most subjects, leaders and teachers have designed an ambitious curriculum for pupils. They want all pupils to develop rich knowledge of the subjects they study. Leaders have designed curriculum plans to make sure that pupils develop their knowledge over time. In French, for example, leaders have thought carefully about how pupils will build up their knowledge in phonics, grammar and vocabulary. Because of the quality of the curriculum, the proportion of pupils choosing to continue to study subjects such as languages is on the up. Leaders and teachers have identified the typical gaps in knowledge which pupils may have, and have designed the curriculum to address these. However, in some subjects, curriculum plans are not as ambitious. This is particularly the case in religious education, which is delivered through 'life' lessons.

Teachers generally present information clearly. In most subjects, teachers spot misconceptions and adapt their teaching to address these. Teachers use a consistent approach to revisiting previous learning and checking pupils' understanding. In most subjects, this is very effective. For example, in English, science and computing, teachers quickly identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and adapt their teaching to address these. Teachers generally have good knowledge of the subjects they teach. However, in some subjects, teachers' knowledge is not as strong. In these subjects, explanations are not as clear and assessment is not used as effectively to check what pupils have learned. There have not been enough opportunities for teachers to develop their specific knowledge of the subjects they teach, or how to teach these well.

Pupils do remember the content they have been taught. They value the support teachers give them to revisit and remember what they have learned. Teachers understand the specific barriers to learning which affect pupils with special

educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in their classes. They use this knowledge to plan carefully how best to support individual pupils.

Pupils read widely at school, and teachers promote a love of reading. The school identifies pupils who may have specific barriers which prevent them from reading fluently. These pupils are given extra support.

In lessons, pupils are focused on their learning. Staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Teachers challenge pupils effectively if they do not behave well in lessons, although some staff do not consistently use school approaches to managing behaviour. Leaders help teachers to manage behaviour, and teachers were very positive about this support. Pupils are supported to improve their behaviour. Staff encourage pupils to attend regularly. Good attendance is celebrated. The attendance of pupils has improved over time.

The personal development of pupils is given very high priority at De Warenne Academy. Leaders and teachers want pupils to be prepared for later life and to have a wide range of opportunities and experiences. Teachers make sure that pupils are well informed about careers and their future choices, and the school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause. Pupils are positive about the support they receive in this area.

Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe and healthy. They are well informed about healthy relationships. The school also teaches pupils about risks such as criminal and sexual exploitation. Teachers skilfully lead discussions on sensitive issues, and pupils feel comfortable discussing these.

The school emphasises respect and celebrates diversity. Pupils understand the importance of this, and say that pupils are respectful and kind towards one another. Because plans for teaching pupils about religions and non-religious worldviews are not well developed, pupils do not know enough about other faiths and beliefs to understand and engage with them in considered ways.

Leaders are focused and committed to continuously improving the school. The principal and her team are passionate about addressing disadvantage and keeping pupils safe. They are ambitious for every pupil in the school. Governors and trustees are closely involved in the work of the school. They carefully check the impact of leaders' improvements. The school has worked hard to engage with parents and carers. However, there is further work needed to ensure that all parents and carers feel part of the school community.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They say that leaders are supportive and that their workload is manageable. Teachers who are early in their careers value the support they are given. Leaders have provided training which has improved the quality of teaching in the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are very knowledgeable about how to keep children safe. All staff in the school are aware of the local risks which pupils may face. The curriculum helps pupils understand these risks and how to keep themselves safe. This includes 'life' lessons, tutor times and assemblies. The content of these is adapted in response to local safeguarding risks.

Pupils trust adults in the school to keep them safe. They are confident to speak to teachers if they are worried. Pupils really value the 'tell us' button on the school website. This lets them report concerns anonymously.

If leaders are concerned about a pupil, they act quickly and effectively to ensure that pupils are safe. They make sure that pupils receive the support they need, including from external agencies.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some curriculum plans are not ambitious enough. This means that pupils do not develop rich knowledge in some subjects. This is particularly the case in religious education, which is delivered through 'life' lessons. Leaders should ensure that curriculum plans are ambitious in all subjects, particularly religious education.
- Some staff do not always apply behaviour expectations or approaches to managing behaviour consistently. This means that some pupils do not behave as well in some sessions as they do in the rest of the school. Leaders should ensure that staff apply behaviour expectations and approaches to managing behaviour consistently in all areas of school life.
- Some teachers do not have sufficiently strong subject knowledge in the subjects they teach. In some cases, this means that teachers' explanations of new content are not as clear as they could be. In others, it means that assessment does not clearly identify what pupils know. Leaders should provide opportunities for teachers to develop rich subject knowledge of the subjects they teach, and subject-specific knowledge of how to teach these effectively.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	135942
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10200712
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	721
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Steven Peter Hodsman
Principal	Anna Rooney
Website	www.dewarenne.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	10 and 11 February 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- De Warenne Academy is a secondary school catering for 721 pupils from age 11 to 16.
- The school uses two alternative provision settings for pupils: St Wilfrid's Academy and More Than Ed.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in religious education, English, mathematics and science. They held discussions with senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers. Inspectors also talked to pupils about their learning, and looked at work they had completed.

- In addition, inspectors considered a range of other subjects. They visited lessons, reviewed curriculum plans with subject leaders and spoke to teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead and reviewed documentation related to safeguarding and referrals to the local authority. They also spoke to staff about how they keep children safe.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator, spoke to pupils with SEND, reviewed plans to support these pupils and visited lessons to see how these pupils are supported to learn.
- Meetings were held with representatives of the academy advisory board and the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors talked to staff and pupils. They analysed the 39 responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey, including 25 free-text responses. They also considered the 46 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 17 responses to our pupil survey.

Inspection team

Tim Jenner, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Eleanor Belfield	Her Majesty's Inspector
Tudor Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector
Liz Cresswell	Ofsted Inspector

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