

# Inspection of Wednesbury Oak Academy

Greenacre Road, Tipton, West Midlands DY4 0AR

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Inspection dates: 26 and 27 January 2022

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Requires improvement

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

The pupils are very much at the heart of Wednesbury Oak Academy. The staff know them as individuals. They make good use of this to care for them and help them to learn. Leaders have ensured that everyone understands and respects the school's values. Pupils demonstrate, for example, tolerance and increasing independence. They respond well to rewards and incentives, such as those for reading. Pupils have opportunities to develop their own leadership skills, for example as prefects or as members of the 'science squad'. They enjoy a range of after-school clubs.

Pupils enjoy school. They concentrate very well in the classroom and behave sensibly around the school. Pupils present their work with care. They are well mannered and polite to adults. Bullying is rare. When it does occur, staff sort it out quickly. Parents and carers appreciate that if they have a concern, it is easy to speak with staff.

Children get off to a very good start. Staff in early years have high expectations for children's learning and behaviour. Many children join the school with limited skills, especially in their speech and language. However, staff identify any additional needs and help them to catch up quickly.

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

The school prioritises reading to very good effect. Leaders have opened the school earlier in the day to help pupils regain ground lost during the COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers have used the extra time to enhance a rich reading curriculum.

From the start of Reception Year, children follow a structured phonics programme that introduces them to letters and their associated sounds. In moving to a single validated scheme, leaders have ensured that staff are well trained. Staff and pupils use the correct technical terms. Staff check carefully that each pupil understands and can pronounce sounds accurately. Pupils' reading books are well matched to their abilities. Teachers ensure that older pupils read a wide range of texts and develop a range of reading skills.

Leaders set high expectations for what pupils should know by the end of key stage 2. In each subject, the curriculum structure ensures that pupils' learning builds on their existing knowledge. Teachers make sure that pupils can use the vocabulary associated with specific subjects. They teach the nature and processes of each subject, alongside the key knowledge. For example, pupils learn how to work scientifically, and how to use evidence in history. Teachers are confident, and generally use curriculum guidance well. However, in lower key stage 2, some activities lack a sharp enough focus on what pupils need to know.

The school's curriculum is broad. Each subject has its own place on the timetable. Teachers develop literacy, numeracy and information technology well in foundation subjects. In science and history, the content goes somewhat beyond the

requirements of the national curriculum. Across the curriculum, teaching emphasises the link between pupils' learning and their future adult lives.

Those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are at risk of falling behind learn well. This is because leaders are ambitious for them, and ensure that they gain the knowledge they need. Teachers are skilled at adapting the learning while placing no ceiling on what pupils can achieve.

Subject leaders are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. They check how well pupils are learning. However, there is more work to do to ensure that the curriculum is fully embedded. This includes checking that all teachers know how to plan activities that best contribute to pupils' longer term knowledge.

The school's values underpin an orderly learning community. Disruption to learning is very rare. Staff manage very effectively a handful of pupils with particular behavioural needs. At lunchtime, a good range of equipment and the support of sports coaches help pupils to play constructively.

The school seeks the best for all its pupils. Staff track in detail the learning of disadvantaged pupils and their participation in trips and clubs to make sure that they do not miss out. Pupils learn in religious education and in geography about different cultures and traditions.

The headteacher understands the school and its community very well. Her plans and actions are finely judged. Staff work together as a team and value the support from leaders. They appreciate the headteacher's steps to reduce their workload. The trustees play an effective part in overseeing the progress of the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff are well trained so that they are vigilant and able to identify any risks to pupils. When a concern arises, leaders take the right steps to involve other agencies that work with children and ensure that they take the necessary actions.

Pupils feel safe in school. Staff have ensured that pupils are fully aware of whom they can turn to if they are worried.

Leaders make the necessary recruitment checks on the staff who join the school. Trustees play their part in ensuring that pupils stay safe.

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

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

- In some foundation subjects, the curriculum is relatively new. Leaders should ensure that all subject leaders have sufficient opportunity to check on how effectively staff are implementing the curriculum in these subjects, so they can make any necessary refinements.
- Some teaching in lower key stage 2 is not planned carefully enough. Some of the activities that pupils complete do not help them in the longer term to know and remember important curriculum content. Leaders should ensure that teachers in this phase are always clear about the knowledge and skills that pupils require. They should then check that teachers set work for pupils that enables them to develop these.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140793
<b>Local authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211758
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	430
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Sarah Beckett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tracy Grieh
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.wednesburyoak.co.uk">www.wednesburyoak.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	24 and 25 April 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school provides full-time alternative provision for a very few of its pupils at a registered alternative provider.

## Information about this inspection

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

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Meetings were held with curriculum leaders and the special educational needs coordinators.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the trust, another three trustees and the trust's company secretary. The lead inspector also spoke with a previous adviser to the school.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils at social times, and with groups of pupils more formally.

- When inspecting safeguarding, the inspectors looked at the school's procedures for recruiting and checking on staff. They also considered the effectiveness of staff training and the procedures to keep pupils safe.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including leaders' plans to improve the school, records of trustee meetings and the school's attendance and behaviour records.
- The inspection took account of responses to Parent View, Ofsted's questionnaire for parents. Two inspectors met with parents in the playground at the start of the second day of the inspection. Inspectors also considered responses to the surveys for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, art and geography. In these subjects, inspectors discussed the school's curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons and scrutinised pupils' work. Inspectors also met with pupils and teachers to discuss learning in these subjects. On the second day of the inspection, inspectors looked at the curriculum in other subjects and scrutinised pupils' work in writing, history and science.
- An inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 reading to an adult.

### **Inspection team**

Martin Spoor, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Potter	Ofsted Inspector
Sally Noble	Ofsted Inspector

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