

Inspection of Louth Academy

Monks' Dyke Road, Louth, Lincolnshire LN11 9AW

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 February 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
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?

Although Louth Academy is situated on two separate campuses, staff and pupils agree that it feels like one school.

There are positive relationships between staff and pupils. Staff care about pupils' education and their well-being. Most pupils said that they feel safe at school, and that they enjoy attending.

Leaders have very high expectations of pupils. These relate to what pupils can achieve academically, and how pupils conduct themselves around the school. Over time, pupils meet these expectations.

Pupils told us that many lessons challenge them, and that the school is helping them become more independent. There is a firm focus on developing pupils' aspirations by giving them all, as school leaders call it, an 'aspirational education'.

Pupils generally behave well and show respectful attitudes. However, in a small minority of lessons, there are incidents of off-task behaviour. Pupils value the new reward system. It allows them to exchange reward points for stationery, sports equipment and reading books.

There are times when some pupils fall out with one another. Staff are on hand to support pupils when this happens. Pupils told us that bullying does occur, but teachers deal with it quickly.

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

Leaders have developed a broad and ambitious curriculum. Subject leaders have decided on the most important knowledge and concepts pupils need to understand, and the skills they want pupils to develop. Leaders have considered the local context so they can bring the curriculum to life. For example, in food technology, pupils learn to descale and prepare fish due to the local links with the fishing industry.

Leaders recognise that many pupils do not opt to study a language at key stage 4. They have worked closely with their feeder primary school to develop pupils' love of language earlier. More pupils are now opting to study a modern foreign language.

Teachers have very good subject knowledge. Leaders ensure that teachers are trained to teach using approaches that help pupils know and remember more. Many teachers model and present information clearly. Teachers check pupils' understanding before they introduce new learning. Teachers ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of subject-specific vocabulary. For example, in business studies, pupils were taught the meaning of 'hierarchy' and 'subordinate' before they looked at management structures. In some lessons, teachers do not match teaching activities precisely enough to the important knowledge pupils need to learn.

Leaders have prioritised improving pupils' literacy and enhancing pupils' love of reading. This includes by providing regular reading in form time. Teachers assess how well pupils can read. They provide support for those pupils who are at the early stages of reading.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported in lessons. Teachers ensure that pupils with SEND can access the same learning and achieve as well as their peers.

Staff and pupils agree that behaviour at the school is much better than it used to be. Changeover times between lessons and social times are calm and orderly. In many lessons, pupils show positive attitudes to learning. Pupils made inspectors aware of, and inspectors did see, some low-level disruption and off-task behaviour. Teachers do not always challenge this behaviour effectively.

Leaders are on a mission to develop well-rounded, global citizens. There are opportunities for pupils to develop their leadership skills and their independence. Some pupils are trained as peer mentors or prefects. The personal development curriculum covers British values, and relationship and sex education. Pupils start to explore future careers in key stage 3. This is further enhanced by independent careers advice in key stage 4.

Trustees and governors hold leaders to account through effective governance. Leaders are accurate in their evaluations of the school. Leaders are on a journey of what they call 'continuous improvement'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have regular safeguarding training and updates. All staff have received enhanced training in how to recognise harmful sexual behaviour.

Leaders have ensured that all pupils know there is someone to talk to if they have a worry or a concern. Pupils can identify these trusted adults confidently. Staff use a consistent approach to recording and reporting concerns as soon as they arise.

Leaders of safeguarding have clear oversight of all safeguarding issues. They work well with external agencies to protect the most vulnerable pupils. Trustees and governors fully understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that all teachers implement the curriculum consistently and securely. Some teachers select activities that do not precisely support the

curriculum's intent. This can limit pupils' opportunities to learn the most important knowledge in some lessons. Leaders should ensure that the implementation of the curriculum is embedded securely and consistently across all subjects.

- Leaders have not ensured that all teachers manage the behaviour of pupils consistently. In some lessons, teachers do not challenge instances of low-level disruption and off-task behaviour effectively. When this is the case, time for learning is lost. Leaders must ensure that all staff understand how to challenge low-level disruption and off-task behaviour consistently.

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	144968
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10212013
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	811
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Philip Bond
Principal	Philip Dickinson
Website	www.louthacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- A new principal took up his substantive post in September 2020.
- The school is situated on two separate sites. Year 7 and Year 8 pupils attend the lower campus. All other years attend the upper campus.
- The school uses two registered alternative providers to educate a small number of pupils on a full-time basis. These are The Pilgrim School and Springwell Mablethorpe Alternative Academy.
- The school meets all the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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 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 carried out deep dives in design and technology, English, mathematics and science. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also visited lessons in other subjects.
- The lead inspector telephoned both of the alternative providers the school uses to educate some pupils on a full-time basis.
- Inspectors spoke to other leaders, including the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator, the designated teacher for children looked after and the senior leader for curriculum development, including literacy.
- The lead inspector met with trustees and with representatives of the local governing body.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer of the Tollbar Multi Academy Trust, of which the school is a member.
- Inspectors considered a wide variety of school documents, including the school's own self-evaluation and the school improvement plan.
- Inspectors took note of the responses received on Ofsted Parent View, and considered the results of the Ofsted staff and pupil questionnaires.
- To judge the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors read the school's relevant policies, scrutinised the single central record, checked the school's procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and met with the designated lead for safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke with a wide range of staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Rakesh Patel, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
John Edwards	Ofsted Inspector
Jackie Thornalley	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Roche	Ofsted Inspector

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