

Inspection of Weston Favell Academy

Booth Lane South, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN3 3EZ

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 February 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils agree that the school is now more of a community. There are now much better relationships between teachers and pupils than was the case previously. The vast majority of pupils enjoy coming to school and say they feel safe and happy.

Parents also recognise that the school has been improving rapidly recently. As one parent told us, 'All staff are dedicated, and the school is going from strength to strength.'

Teachers have high expectations of pupils. Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive. Pupils agree that if poor behaviour occurs, teachers challenge and deal with it quickly. Many pupils also agree that if bullying was to occur it would not be tolerated.

The curriculum provides many opportunities to learn about a wide range of subjects. However, pupils are not able to study all these subjects in enough depth in Years 7 and 8. As a result, pupils do miss out on some important aspects of the curriculum.

The staff know students in the sixth form well. Many students hold positive views on how well the sixth form is preparing them for future success.

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

Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum in key stage 3 is ambitious for all pupils. Pupils are unable to gain a depth of knowledge in some subjects which end for them in Year 8. Leaders have not ensured that sufficient curriculum time is given to these subjects in order to fulfil the intentions detailed in the plans for these subjects. Pupils can study the breadth and depth of some subjects, such as English, physical education, history, and geography, which continue into year 9 for all pupils.

Leaders have identified the large concepts they want pupils to know in each subject. In many subjects, these large concepts are broken down into smaller components of knowledge. This helps teachers teach this knowledge explicitly and as a result pupils remember this knowledge and can build on it. This is not the case for several subjects which end for some pupils in key stage 3. In subjects such as art and computing, concepts are not broken down well enough. Teachers do not teach this knowledge explicitly enough. Some pupils are unable to recall important knowledge in these subjects.

There is a consistent approach to teaching in many lessons. Teachers show good subject knowledge. They present information clearly in most lessons across all subjects. Teachers model answers for pupils. They use a range of activities to check that pupils have remembered knowledge long term. Pupils are well prepared for their future examinations. There are occasions when teachers move on to new

learning without addressing any gaps in pupils' knowledge from the topic they have just finished studying.

Students in the sixth form benefit from well-developed programmes of study. These not only focus on academic qualifications but also on volunteering and enrichment opportunities. The curriculum is ambitious in the sixth form. Staff support students well in preparing for their next steps. For example, they provide careful guidance to those students who decide to continue their studies at university after sixth form. Many of these students are the first in their families to move on to higher education. More pupils are now choosing to stay and study in the sixth form after they complete Year 11.

Leaders have prioritised reading. They have introduced a new reading programme in form time. Pupils read chosen texts which are varied and challenging. This gives pupils the opportunity to improve their vocabulary and exposes them to different genres of books.

Teachers support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively in lessons. Leaders have ensured that teachers know the needs of pupils and know how to address these needs when teaching them. The SEND coordinator monitors how well pupils with SEND achieve and intervenes when they do not. This helps pupils with SEND achieve as well as their peers.

There is a focus on pupils' wider development. Leaders have planned enough curriculum time to teach about aspects of personal development. These aspects include British values and healthy relationships. Some pupils enjoy opportunities to take part in after-school sporting activities. There are other opportunities for pupils to join clubs such as the LGBTQ+ club. Not all aspects of personal development are covered well enough in each year group. Students in the sixth form told us they would like more age-appropriate relationships education. Some pupils in Year 9 told us they would benefit from further opportunities to celebrate cultural diversity.

Leaders at the school have changed many things since their arrival. They have engaged with the pupils, parents and the wider community in their work to improve the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils know there is always someone at the school available to talk to if they have a problem.

Leaders have trained staff to follow safeguarding procedures and protocols. Staff are also well trained to recognise signs that a pupil might need help. Staff know to report all concerns, no matter how small.

Safeguarding leaders have a clear oversight of all incidents that are reported. They use this information to act swiftly when they recognise that a pupil might be at risk. Leaders work closely with external agencies to safeguard pupils.

The trust also conducts safeguarding reviews of the school. The trust challenges leaders to improve the safeguarding culture further.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum that pupils learn in key stage 3 is as ambitious as the national curriculum. Pupils who choose not to continue with subjects such as art, computing and music into Year 9 do not have the opportunity to gain the cultural capital that these subjects provide. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum in key stage 3 is ambitious and enables all pupils to experience the full breadth and depth of all subjects.
- The core knowledge that builds up to larger concepts is not broken down well enough in subjects which end in year 8. Teachers in these subjects do not consider precisely enough what pupils need to know for them to understand the concepts taught in sufficient depth. Leaders must ensure that teachers know the most important knowledge they should teach so that pupils remember that knowledge and deepen their understanding of what they are learning.
- Leaders have not ensured that all teachers in all subjects consistently check that knowledge is secure before pupils move on to new learning. As a result, some pupils in some subjects have gaps in their knowledge which are not addressed. Leaders must ensure that all teachers understand the importance of consistently checking for gaps in knowledge and addressing these gaps effectively before they move learning on.
- Leaders have planned activities and dedicated curriculum time to promote pupils' broader development, including enhancing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leaders are aware that a few aspects of the provision for pupils' personal development in certain year groups are not as consistently well planned. On occasions, these aspects are not of the same high quality as other aspects of the provision for personal development. When this is the case, some pupils miss out on valuable personal development opportunities. Leaders must ensure that all opportunities for personal development are of equally high quality and accessible to all pupils.

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	136948
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10211656
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1407
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	135
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mike Hamlin
Principal	Todd Johnson
Website	www.westonfavellacademy.org
Dates of previous inspection	9 and 10 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher was appointed in May 2021.
- The school provides alternative education provision for a small number of pupils at Hospital and Outreach Education.
- 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 and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in art, English, physical education, modern foreign languages, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also visited a range of lessons in other subjects. For these subjects, they checked curriculum planning and scrutinised the work pupils had produced.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for behaviour, personal development, the sixth form, and the provision or pupils with SEND.
- An inspector met with the leader of the sixth form.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from key stages 3 and 4. They also spoke to groups of students in the sixth form.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. He reviewed a range of documents, including the school's single central record.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- Inspectors met with all teachers and a group of support staff.
- The lead inspector had a telephone conversation with the chair of trustees and met with representatives from the trust, including the chief operating officer.
- An inspector visited the on-site alternative provision. The lead inspector contacted the registered alternative provision, which is attended by a small number of pupils at this school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the results of the Ofsted questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Rakesh Patel, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Imtiaz Patel	Ofsted Inspector
Sally Wicken	Ofsted Inspector
John Edwards	Ofsted Inspector
Aoife Galletly	Her Majesty's Inspector
Chris Davies	Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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