

# Inspection of Wombourne High School

Ounsdale Road, Wombourne, Wolverhampton, West Midlands, WV5 8BJ

---

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 March 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Sixth-form provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

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

Wombourne High School is a calm and orderly school, where pupils can flourish. Behaviour in lessons and during social time is positive. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that if it does occur staff deal with it well.

Most parents and pupils say that they would recommend the school. Several commented on the high-quality support received during the COVID-19 pandemic. As one parent put it, 'The provision of home learning and support during COVID lockdowns was outstanding.'

Leaders are ambitious for every pupil. They have developed a broad, balanced curriculum to support this ambition. Teachers deliver the curriculum well. Learning is appropriately planned to help pupils to make progress. Most pupils feel that they are making good progress.

Relationships between adults and pupils are positive. Pupils say staff know them well. They are confident that they will be supported if they have a problem.

There is a diverse range of extra-curricular subjects on offer. These include sports clubs, the Duke of Edinburgh Award and drama productions. Pupils in key stage 3 can attend 'masterclasses'. These give them an opportunity to study an area of their choice in greater depth. Examples include making and tasting world cuisines and studying robotics.

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

The headteacher and senior leaders have led some significant improvements across the school over the last three years. They have been well supported by The Invictus Education Trust in making these improvements.

Leaders are ambitious for every pupil. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), study a wide range of subjects. Leaders ensure that academic rigour sits at the heart of a broad and balanced curriculum. A high proportion of pupils complete the English Baccalaureate. However, pupils are also encouraged to diversify when it comes to option choices at key stage 4. They choose from a wide range of GCSEs and vocational qualifications. The curriculum prepares pupils well for their next steps at the end of Year 11.

Leaders have recognised that where pupils are not making as much progress as their peers this is often the result of lower literacy levels. In response to this they have introduced departmental literacy schemes. These are already well established in some areas, for example in English and mathematics. However, this is not the case in all subjects. Leaders know that establishing literacy schemes in all areas and monitoring the impact of these is critical to pupils' future success.

The school is part of the 'Invictus Sixth Form'. The number of pupils in Year 11 staying on into the sixth form increased significantly in 2021. Sixth form provision is carefully planned by the trust. As a result, students can choose from a wide range of A-level and level 3 BTEC qualifications. They are also encouraged to involve themselves in the sixth form enrichment programme. Examples on offer include sailing, life guarding, first aid and the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Students say they get excellent support when considering their future choices. In 2021, over two thirds of students in Year 13 progressed to university, and a quarter went on to modern apprenticeship programmes.

Subject leaders and their teams plan carefully together. They establish the knowledge and concepts that pupils need to learn and how these will be sequenced over time. Lessons are planned around set routines, such as 'do now tasks' focused on recalling prior learning and 'GRIT' time focussed on independent work. Pupils say these routines help them to learn.

Assessment points are used to pinpoint gaps in pupils' knowledge. Pupils then undertake a range of teacher-led or independent study to address these gaps. Evidence from books and pupil discussions shows that this works well for most pupils.

Pupils' personal development is thoughtfully planned from Year 7 to Year 13. Specialist staff confidently deliver weekly personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education lessons. These are supplemented by work in tutor periods and assemblies. Pupils work on issues such as relationships, keeping safe and careers. Pupils also learn about wider social issues and current affairs. For example, during the inspection, pupils were discussing the Ukrainian conflict and the resulting refugee crisis.

In an effort to re-establish positive behaviour routines at the start of the academic year, leaders introduced a new behaviour policy. This has worked well for most pupils. However, a small number of pupils have not responded well to the new expectations. As a result, suspensions have risen, including for a number of pupils with SEND.

Staff say they are proud to work in the school and feel it is well led and managed. They feel leaders trust them and take their workload into account when planning improvements.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that the school has a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff are trained to recognise when pupils may be at risk of harm. Safeguarding leaders ensure that any concerns are followed up promptly. They work with families and a range of agencies to ensure that additional support is in place where it is needed.

Pupils say that they are taught how to stay safe. They talked about work done in PSHE lessons, form time and assemblies around topics, such as online safety, sexual harassment and knife crime. They are confident that there is always an adult in school that they can talk to if they have a concern and that they will get the support they need.

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

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

- Currently, the literacy levels of some pupils are hindering them in accessing the curriculum fully. The school has recently introduced a new reading scheme, which is starting to have impact in some subjects. Leaders should make sure that these plans are implemented fully in all subjects to ensure that pupils become enthusiastic and habitual readers as the basis for developing excellent literacy skills.
- The recently introduced behaviour strategy does not meet all pupils' needs and has not helped some pupils to manage their behaviour. For a small number of pupils, particularly those with SEND, it has resulted in an increased number of suspensions. Leaders should ensure that they monitor the impact of the behaviour strategy and provide all pupils with the support they need to help them manage their behaviour.

## **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>	141343
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10205979
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1028
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	158
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Robert Dimmock
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gemma Smith
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.wombournehighschool.co.uk/">www.wombournehighschool.co.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 – 14 March 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

## Information about this school

- This school is one of seven schools that comprise the Invictus Education Multi Academy Trust (MAT).
- The school uses full-time alternative provision for a small number of pupils at two registered providers.
- The school meets 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 the school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the principal and other senior leaders. Meetings were held with curriculum leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors also met with a range of other staff, including early careers teachers, trustees of the MAT and the chief executive officer of the MAT.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of safeguarding information, including the school's safeguarding policy, spoke to staff and pupils about safeguarding and looked at how pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. The lead inspector spoke to the safeguarding leader about the reporting and recording of any safeguarding incidents.
- Inspectors took account of the free-text comments and the responses on Parent View, Ofsted's online inspection questionnaire. Inspectors also considered the responses to the pupil and staff surveys.

## Inspection team

Eddie Wilkes, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Huw Bishop	Ofsted Inspector
Helen Reeves	Ofsted Inspector
Sal Yunus	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2022