

Inspection of Highworth Warneford School

Shrivenham Road, Highworth, Swindon, Wiltshire SN6 7BZ

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 April 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff and pupils say the school has 'soul.' Leaders know pupils, their families and the local community well. The house system offers frequent opportunities for competition and pupil leadership. The music show is for pupils of all abilities to take part in. Many pupils enjoy being a part of performing arts and sports events.

Leaders often ask pupils to give feedback. Pupils say they are listened to. Most pupils say that when bullying happens it is reported and dealt with. Pupils have many opportunities to discuss issues.

Pupils are polite. Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Pupils say that behaviour in lessons is good most of the time. However, some pupils are concerned behaviour is not dealt with consistently. Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe. They know how to report concerns. However, some pupils say they would not be comfortable reporting harassment or derogatory behaviours because they are embarrassed.

In some subjects, pupils learn well and understand what they need to do to improve. However, not all pupils have the same experiences and there are sometimes differences in what they are taught within some subjects.

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

Leaders ensure the curriculum is at the centre of the school's priorities. There is currently a focus on planning the key stage 3 curriculum. Where leaders have planned what pupils learn in subjects from Year 7 to Year 11, the curriculum is well structured. Leaders have embedded opportunities for pupils to revise their learning and apply it. But some subjects are not as well structured. Therefore, pupils do not have the secure knowledge they need to progress. In some subjects, leaders have not made appropriate adaptations to the curriculum to take account of gaps in pupils' knowledge. In English, some Year 10 pupils entered for GCSE English literature are not prepared well enough for these examinations. In Year 11, there are fewer opportunities to study texts and poetry. The school has recently appointed a new special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and is improving the support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND are well supported in lessons.

Teachers give clear instructions and provide useful examples which show pupils what they are working towards. However, sometimes pupils do not have the knowledge they need to learn new concepts. The reading programme does not accurately identify pupils' needs and there is a lack of challenge for some pupils.

There are high expectations for behaviour, and pupils' conduct is calm. Although leaders track patterns in behaviour, they could do more to analyse the data they

have to support further improvements. Pupils say the school is becoming a more inclusive place. Pupils value the LGBTQ+ group.

There are several pupils accessing alternative provision or on part-time timetables. Leaders do not always track this carefully. Persistent absence is high, especially for pupils who are disadvantaged or pupils with SEND. COVID-19 has made this more challenging. Attendance is getting better, and leaders are working to improve it further. Leaders work well with individual pupils but less effectively with groups of vulnerable pupils.

The school offers opportunities for pupils to support their personal development. Leaders have planned the personal, social and health (PSHE) curriculum with care. Pupils learn about the importance of healthy relationships in a way that is age-appropriate. Leaders listen to parents and pupils when structuring the programme. There is a well-planned careers programme. The Baker Clause is met. The Baker Clause requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships. Pupils speak highly of work experience and working with professionals from industry.

There are good links between the trustees and the staff. Trustees work closely with leaders to assure themselves about the quality of education. Staff are positive about the training they receive. They say leaders prioritise the well-being of staff and pupils in the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff and pupils know what to do if they have any concerns. Staff receive the training they need. There are effective systems in place for reporting concerns. The pastoral system supports pupils well. There is a strong focus on looking after pupils' mental health, especially as a result of COVID-19.

The school works with families, external agencies and the local authority to protect vulnerable pupils. Leaders have responded to pupils' needs by appointing professionals to work within the school, such as a senior mental health lead.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is not always well sequenced to enable pupils to learn effectively. As a result, pupils are not well prepared for the next stages of learning. Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum is consistently well planned across all subjects to give pupils the knowledge they need to succeed as they move through the school.

- There is a high number of pupils on part-time timetables and/or attending alternative provision. This includes several pupils with SEND. Leaders do not monitor the provision closely enough to ensure the suitability or success of the support. Leaders need to plan strategically with all stakeholders to support these pupils during this period of intervention.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly. Leaders are actively engaging with pupils, families and external agencies to improve this. However, leaders need to adopt a more strategic approach to improve the attendance of vulnerable pupils.
- The reading ability of pupils is not always identified accurately. As a result, these pupils either cannot access the curriculum confidently or are not challenged in what they are reading. Leaders need to ensure that pupils read appropriate texts.

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	136860
Local authority	Swindon
Inspection number	10211732
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	770
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Malcolm Holbrook
Headteacher	Andrew Steele
Website	http://www.warnefordschool.org
Date of previous inspection	22–23 March 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a single academy trust.
- Since the previous inspection the number of pupils on roll has fallen.
- The school uses three registered alternative providers: Riverside Centre EOTAS, Swindon Tuition Services, and Fernbrook PRU.
- Following the last inspection report, the governing body has been replaced by a board of trustees.

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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in English, science, geography and physical education. In each subject, inspectors visited lessons, scrutinised pupils' work and

held discussions with subject leaders, teachers and pupils in both key stages. Inspectors also visited tutor times.

- Inspectors met with the Headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team. They also held meetings with the designated leader for safeguarding, curriculum leaders and the SENCo.
- The lead inspector met with the vice-chair of the trustees and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils formally and informally around the school site and across both key stages.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documentation including policies, plans and record-keeping for: safeguarding; behaviour management; attendance; careers education, advice and guidance; and relationships, sex and health education.
- The lead inspector reviewed and considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Rachel Hesketh, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Stuart Wilson	Ofsted Inspector
Lydia Pride	Her Majesty's Inspector
Gill Hickling	Ofsted Inspector
Kathy Maddocks	Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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