

Inspection of Wednesfield High Academy

Lichfield Road, Wednesfield, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV11 3ES

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 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?

Staff and pupils are proud to be part of this improving school. Teachers and leaders are working hard to make sure pupils do well. They have reviewed the curriculum in all subjects to help pupils achieve better than they have previously. However, there is more work needed in some subjects to ensure that teachers are clear about the detail of what should be taught.

Pupils behave well in lessons. They are attentive and have good relationships with their teachers. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They often provide interesting activities for their pupils. However, teaching does not consistently help pupils to understand and remember the key points in their learning.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils' wider development, ensuring there is a broad offer of clubs, activities, external trips and visits. Many pupils take up these opportunities.

Pupils are happy, enjoy going to school and feel safe. Pupils and parents say that bullying does exist, but in most cases, leaders deal with it well.

Students in the sixth form benefit from a consistently well-planned curriculum. Experienced teachers provide challenging and engaging lessons that support students in making good progress. Students support and care for one another and are excellent role models for younger pupils.

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

Governors and leaders share a vision for a successful inclusive school. They care deeply about the pupils. Leaders work well with external agencies to support pupils and to drive improvements in the quality of provision. There is clear evidence of the success leaders have had in improving behaviour, teaching and safeguarding. However, improvements to the curriculum are not yet having the impact that the school intends them to have on pupils' achievement by the end of Year 11.

The curriculum helps teachers to build on pupils' previous learning in a sensible order in most subjects. However, in a few subjects at key stage 3, the curriculum is less well developed. Some leaders lack the specialist subject knowledge that would help them to ensure that the curriculum is planned in enough detail so all teachers deliver the full national curriculum. As a result, in some subjects, pupils miss out on some important subject knowledge.

There is considerable variation in how well the curriculum is taught. In some subjects, for example history, teachers explain new ideas well and pupils confidently build their knowledge and skills. However, in some other subjects, teachers do not consistently choose appropriate methods or resources to help pupils understand new ideas. Teachers do not always check pupils' understanding, which means that pupils do not learn as well as they should.

The leader for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) gives teachers clear guidance on how to help identified pupils in their lessons. In many lessons, teachers adapt resources effectively to support pupils with SEND. Pupils say they feel well supported.

Leaders understand the importance of developing reading skills across the whole school. The new library provides a vibrant base for reading, and pupils are keen to spend time there. Pupils who need help with their reading have purposeful reading interventions. Pupils enjoy the regular reading lessons that have been introduced in Years 7 and 8.

There is an ambitious and inclusive post-16 curriculum. There is a good breadth of academic and vocational subjects. Students with SEND are supported effectively to access the curriculum. The curriculum is planned and delivered well. As a result, students do well in both their academic and vocational examinations.

Leaders make sure that students are prepared well to move on to jobs, training or university. Pupils have opportunities to undertake work experience and visit universities, colleges and local industry. There is effective careers support and guidance that helps to prepare pupils for the next steps in their education or career.

In lessons, pupils usually behave well. They are attentive, polite and hardworking. The school population has increased significantly in the last few years. This means that corridors and stairwells are very busy. A small number of pupils can be noisy and immature at lesson changeovers. This leaves some pupils feeling worried about moving around the school.

The school provides meaningful opportunities to understand how to be respectful, active citizens and how to debate ideas in a considered way. Pupils value the opportunities to be student leaders. Pupils of different cultures and faiths integrate well and show respect for difference.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in school. There are effective arrangements in place to identify and manage any concerns. There are good links with other agencies help to protect children.

Staff have received training and have regular updates and briefings on safeguarding issues. Teachers are confident that they know how to deal with any safeguarding concerns.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when online. They are taught about relationships and local and wider risks to their safety. Pupils talk positively about their school and know who to speak to if they have any concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are working to improve the quality of the curriculum. However, some teachers are not always clear about the detail of what should be taught. As a result, pupils do not benefit from a coherent, broad, rich curriculum in some subjects. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is planned in enough detail to support all teachers in delivering the full national curriculum.
- The implementation of the curriculum varies in quality between subjects and within subjects. Strong practice exists but it is not evident throughout the school. Inconsistent areas include teachers' choices of methods and resources when explaining new concepts, support for pupils to remember new ideas and the methods used to check that pupils understand their learning. Consequently, pupils are not learning as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is implemented consistently well throughout the school.
- A minority of pupils do not show the self-regulation and maturity expected when moving around the school. This causes some pupils to worry about their safety in the busy corridors. Leaders should work with pupils to improve the way they move around the building, making the school feel safer for all.

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.

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	141245
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	10241250
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	1056
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	124
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alan Edwards
Headteacher	Niki Carpenter
Website	www.wednesfieldacademy.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	4 and 5 December 2018 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses full-time alternative provision at one registered provider.
- 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.
- The school is currently part of the Greenheart Learning Partnership. However, they have been re-brokered to the Matrix Academy Trust and will move when legal arrangements are complete.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this graded 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.
- The lead inspector met with the members of the school's governing committee, representatives of Greenheart Learning Partnership, the headteacher, and senior leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, history, modern foreign languages and art. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum and visited a sample of lessons. Inspectors met with teachers and spoke with pupils about their learning. Inspectors also scrutinised samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders and staff working in pastoral roles. Inspectors spoke with pupils about their wider development and other aspects of school life.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of safeguarding documentation, including the school's single central record. They scrutinised other documentation, including leaders' records of staff training.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and the responses to Ofsted's pupil and staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Deborah James, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Gwen Onyon	Ofsted Inspector
Ellen Walton	Ofsted Inspector
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