

Inspection of school: Waingels

Waingels Road, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire RG5 4RF

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 June 2023

Outcome

Waingels continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy being part of the inclusive community that is Waingels College. Leaders have high standards and are ambitious for all. Leaders' vision to be exceptional, at the heart of the community and where 'better never stops' is kept at the centre of their work.

The vast majority of pupils are respectful and proud of their school. Leaders have worked tirelessly to ensure that all pupils are made to feel welcome quickly. Bullying is not accepted. Leaders have established strong systems to support pupils when bullying occurs. Most pupils feel safe. They know to report any concerns and that 'any teacher is a safe haven'.

Most pupils have a positive attitude to their learning. They help, support and encourage each other. Sixth-form students appreciate the wide range of subjects available and the support they receive. Pupils throughout the school value the wide range of extra-curricular clubs they can go to. These include debating, geography club, cricket, choir and creative writing.

One parent, representative of the sentiments of many, said that 'the school is a kind and caring school', and that their children had been 'proud and fortunate to attend' and will value their 'lasting friendships and happy memories'.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. There are technical and vocational options and the opportunity to study the English Baccalaureate selection of subjects. Leaders have identified the important knowledge they want pupils to learn. This includes making links to events that are important for pupils. The curriculum is well sequenced. It builds pupils' knowledge and develops skills for future learning and employment. In stronger subjects, the curriculum identifies exactly what teachers need to teach and when to teach it. In these subjects, pupils achieve well. However, the curriculum in a minority of subjects is not yet embedded as completely. Leaders know exactly what they need to do to complete this work.

Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. They are enthusiastic about their subjects. Students stay on for the sixth form and are very positive about the provision, many describing the teaching as 'good and supportive'. Students in the sixth form achieve very well and are well prepared for their next steps.

Teachers check pupils' learning well. Teachers use carefully considered strategies to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. Questioning is a strength and staff use skilful questioning to identify misconceptions. They also use a variety of strategies to help pupils to remember and use their new knowledge. These are effective.

Leaders have high ambition for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The provision has been improved. Leaders have clear systems in place to identify pupils' specific needs. They make sure that staff understand how best to support pupils, including adapting activities as needed. Pupils have a key worker and a place where they can go for further support.

While there is a focus on reading, a whole-school approach for supporting pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read, or who lack fluency and/or confidence, is not embedded fully. Pupils who struggle with reading do not always receive the effective support they need. In some departments, reading strategies are planned as part of the learning, but this is not consistent.

A minority of pupils do not behave well enough. Some of these pupils re-offend and do not learn from the sanctions given. Leaders have systems in place to change this behaviour but, currently, not all pupils and parents see them as being effective.

Leaders' work to promote pupils' wider development is a strength of the school. Leaders have created a highly effective programme that equips pupils with the knowledge and skills needed for their future. Careers education is comprehensive. Pupils experience a variety of educational providers, trips to universities and work experience in Years 10 and 12.

Pupils value the wide range of extra-curricular activities. Furthermore, the annual enrichment week enhances the curriculum with activities such as trips to Lulworth Cove, the Imperial War Museum and Bletchley Park. Leaders ensure that all pupils, including those with SEND, benefit from the wide range of additional opportunities on offer. Pupils experience different environments and challenges, and learn about topics related to the curriculum.

Leaders, including governors, value the work of all staff. Leaders consult with staff regularly about how to improve the school. Staff are positive about the school. They appreciate how leaders take their workload and their well-being into consideration. Furthermore, new staff and early careers teachers speak highly of the support and mentoring that they have received.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise safeguarding. They ensure that safeguarding systems are robust and understood clearly by all pupils and staff. Leaders are persistent when outside agencies are involved. They make sure that pupils at risk of harm get the help and support they need.

Leaders make all necessary checks to ensure that staff are safe to work with children. Governors check leaders safeguarding work thoroughly and identify any improvements that may be required. Leaders ensure that all staff receive regular, relevant and comprehensive safeguarding training.

Pupils have age-appropriate knowledge of how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders' work to support pupils who find reading difficult is not focused sharply enough on the skills and knowledge pupils need to become confident, fluent readers. This means that pupils do not catch up quickly enough and struggle to access the curriculum in many subjects. Leaders should ensure that a clear, coherent approach to teaching early reading is embedded fully across the school.
- A minority of pupils do not behave well enough and are not responding to the systems to address this. Some pupils and parents do not see these actions as being effective. Leaders should focus their efforts to address these small pockets of poor behaviour and ensure that all have confidence in this work.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Waingels College, to be good in April 2013.

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	142166
Local authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	10269089
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
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	1366
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	180
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Michael Marsden
Headteacher	Lindsey Humber
Website	www.waingels.wokingham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school currently uses two registered alternative 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

- 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 spoke to the headteacher, senior leaders and a wide range of staff and governors.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, geography, history and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils about learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. This included lessons in the sixth form. They also looked at leaders' work to promote reading across the school.
- The inspectors reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising safeguarding records and interviewing staff, and through discussions with pupils.
- The views of staff and pupils were taken into account through the confidential surveys and discussions during the inspection.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents through the responses to Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Julie Summerfield, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Neil Strowger	Ofsted Inspector
Jane Cartwright	Ofsted Inspector

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