

Inspection of Lees Brook Academy

Morley Road, Chaddesden, Derby, Derbyshire DE21 4QX

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 September 2023

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

The principal of this school is Clare Watson. This school is part of Archway Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Sian Hampton, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Malcolm Trobe.

What is it like to attend this school?

Lees Brook Academy is a caring and inclusive school.

The school has high expectations of pupils. However, some staff do not always ensure that all pupils work well in lessons. Pupils are happy at school. They said that behaviour has improved. Most pupils behave well in lessons and at unstructured times. The school is calm and orderly.

There are positive relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils said that teachers are fair when dealing with any conduct issues. They said that bullying happens occasionally. Pupils are confident that staff will deal with any incidents well. Pupils feel safe in school. They know who they can talk to if they have any concerns. They feel well supported.

Pupils have many opportunities to develop their talents and interests. There is a wide range of extra-curricular clubs that many pupils take part in. For example, pupils attend badminton, basketball and football clubs. Many pupils also take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Pupils can also contribute to the life of the school by being anti-bullying ambassadors, behaviour mentors, prefects and by being on the student council. Many pupils enjoy taking on these responsibilities.

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

The school and the trust have worked hard to improve all areas of the curriculum and its delivery. This means pupils now have a stronger curriculum offer. This is not yet reflected in the published results for all subjects. This is because the pupils who have had the improved curriculum have yet to take public examinations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), have access to a broad and ambitious curriculum, including the full range of Ebacc subjects at key stage 4.

The school has ensured that the curriculum in all subjects is well planned. The school has also set out the order that pupils should learn new content. This helps pupils to build on what they have already learned and to achieve well.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They present new information clearly. Most teachers use questioning well to check that pupils understand what they have learned. At the start of lessons, all teachers use activities to help pupils recap what they have learned. Some teachers do not check pupils' responses well enough. This means that gaps in learning and misconceptions are not always addressed. As a result, some pupils do not always learn as well as they could.

Most teachers use well-selected activities so that pupils develop their knowledge and skills. Some pupils do not always complete these activities fully. Some teachers do

not always ensure that pupils complete tasks. This means that, for some pupils, they do not produce work of high quality and do not build on what they have learned.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with SEND well. Teachers have detailed information on how to meet the needs of these pupils. Most teachers use this information well to help pupils with SEND access the curriculum and achieve well. However, this is not yet consistent. The school is aware of this and has clear plans to address it.

The school prioritises reading. There is a well-structured programme of support for pupils who are at the early stages of reading. This is helping these pupils to become more confident and fluent readers.

Students in the sixth form benefit from a curriculum that is well matched to their needs. Teachers in the sixth form have strong subject knowledge and deliver the curriculum well. Students get effective personalised support. This helps them to progress through the curriculum well.

The school has high expectations of how pupils should behave. There is a clear behaviour management system in place. Staff use this well. Behaviour has improved, and low-level disruption is rare.

The school has planned well for pupils' personal development. Pupils learn how to keep safe online. They learn about how to be healthy. Pupils have a good understanding of fundamental British values. They learn about democracy and human rights. Pupils know to treat others who may be different from them with respect. The school ensures that pupils have many opportunities to engage with local employers, colleges and universities. This prepares pupils well for their next stage in education.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel well supported by leaders. Trust leaders and those responsible for governance know the school well. They are clear about what still needs to improve. They have ensured that the school has the support it needs for further improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some lessons, teachers do not always check pupils' understanding well enough. This means that gaps in learning and misconceptions are not always addressed. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The

school should ensure that all teachers systematically check pupils' understanding so that gaps in learning and misconceptions can be addressed.

- Some teachers do not always check that pupils are completing work, and some pupils do not do enough work in lessons. This means that some pupils do not always develop their knowledge and skills in some subjects. The school should ensure that teachers check that pupils are completing work to the required standard so that all pupils develop their knowledge and skills in all subjects.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	143934
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	10288355
Type of school	Secondary
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	1,108
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	60
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Malcolm Trobe
Principal	Clare Watson
Website	www.leesbrook.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	November 2019

Information about this school

- The school joined Archway Learning Trust in February 2021.
- The principal was appointed in July 2022.
- The school uses two registered alternative providers for a small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school’s education provision.
- 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 and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the principal, the vice-principal, and four assistant principals.
- The lead inspector met with the CEO of the trust, the deputy CEO and the director of teaching and learning.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, English, geography, physical education and science. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils’ work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum and visited lessons in some other subjects.
- Inspectors visited tutorial sessions and assemblies.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils’ interests first.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from a range of year groups, including pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted’s staff questionnaire.
- An inspector held telephone conversations with the representatives of the alternative providers used by the school.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of trustees and the chair of the academy advisory board.

Inspection team

Paul Halcro, lead inspector	His Majesty’s Inspector
Keval Thakrar	Ofsted Inspector
Farhan Adam	Ofsted Inspector
Janis Warren	Ofsted Inspector
John Craig	Ofsted Inspector

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