

# Inspection of Waltham Toll Bar Academy

Station Road, New Waltham, Grimsby, Lincolnshire DN36 4RZ

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Inspection dates: 18 and 19 October 2023

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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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	Outstanding

The principal of this school is Nigel Whittle. This school is part of Lincolnshire Gateway Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Martin Brown, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Philip John Bond.

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 nine years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time. From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

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

Pupils at the school benefit from the standard of education they receive. Recent changes have led to improvements in the behaviour of pupils and in the educational opportunities they receive. Most pupils go on to achieve well in school. This supports them to secure appropriate next steps in their education, training or employment.

Pupils' conduct is of a high standard. Interactions between adults and pupils are polite and respectful. Disruption to lessons is infrequent. When this does happen, staff take appropriate action to address it. Pupils are rewarded for their positive behaviours. Bullying and other unkind behaviours are rare. Pupils know how to raise their concerns with an adult. Pupils benefit from the school's effective pastoral support.

The school's curriculum extends beyond the academic subjects that pupils study. Leaders consider the personal development of pupils to be as important as their academic achievements. Pupils have a number of opportunities to contribute to the life of the school in leadership roles. These include as members of the school council or by supporting enrichment activities for their peers. Pupils enjoy school and the opportunities it provides.

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

There have been significant recent changes to the school's leadership team. The trust and those responsible for governance have supported school leaders to become established in their roles. The trust continues to provide ongoing support to make further improvements. Some parents and carers do not feel well listened to. They would welcome further improvements in the school's communication, including in relation to special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The school has developed an ambitious curriculum for pupils, including disadvantaged pupils. The sixth-form curriculum has been refined to reflect students' interests. Leaders have carefully considered the important knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. Pupils' learning builds in complexity over time. In subjects such as history and technology, the curriculum is well established and pupils develop detailed knowledge. Some other subjects require further work to reach this high standard.

Teachers explain new information clearly. They help pupils to revisit prior knowledge before using it in a new context. Teachers understand the needs of pupils with SEND well. They make appropriate adaptations to support pupils with SEND in lessons. Teachers check what pupils know. However, in some cases, the questions or activities used to check pupils' understanding are not well chosen. This does not enable teachers to identify and address pupils' misconceptions consistently well.

Leaders are extending the opportunities for pupils to read widely and more frequently. The school uses a number of strategies to include reading in subjects as

well as during tutor time. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive additional help. Currently, leaders are establishing a phonics programme to support those pupils in the earliest stages of learning to read.

Pupils attend school regularly and are punctual. Attendance is especially strong in the sixth form. Pupils behave well in lessons and at social times. The school has developed a new behaviour policy that is well understood by pupils and adults. Staff teach pupils how to behave appropriately. These approaches have helped to reduce significantly the number of pupils who receive a suspension for poor behaviour. Pupils' behaviour has improved over time.

Leaders have significantly enhanced the personal development opportunities available to pupils. There is an extensive and varied extra-curricular offer. This includes sports, performing arts, mock trials and mental health clubs. Pupils receive appropriate careers advice and guidance. These are supplemented with external speakers and visits, such as those to local universities and the Houses of Parliament. Leaders have recently made changes that improve the support that students in the sixth form receive when planning their next steps in education, employment or training. These ensure that all students receive the same, detailed careers information post-16.

Pupils learn about important issues, such as British values, in personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons. Leaders use these lessons to teach pupils about staying safe in the locality and beyond. For example, pupils know how to keep themselves safe from risks such as criminal exploitation. Pupils develop a secure and age-appropriate understanding of the school's curriculums for relationships and sex education and health education. Leaders have strengthened the PSHE curriculum that students in the sixth form study. This is now as ambitious as it is for their younger peers.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The school does not have a programme to support pupils in the early stages of learning to read. These pupils do not catch up with their peers. This limits their ability to access the curriculum. The school should establish an effective approach to helping pupils learn to read accurately and fluently.
- Some questions or activities that teachers use are not well chosen. When this happens, pupils' misconceptions are not identified and addressed promptly. The school should ensure that teachers carefully plan questions to check pupils' understanding.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136268
<b>Local authority</b>	North East Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10266137
<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>	1,911
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	216
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Philip John Bond
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Martin Brown
<b>Principal</b>	Nigel Whittle
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.walthamtollbaracademy.co.uk">www.walthamtollbaracademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 and 14 November 2013, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of Lincolnshire Gateway Academies Trust, a multi-academy trust.
- The principal joined the school in April 2022. A large majority of school leaders are also new to their post since this date.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The school uses two registered alternative provisions.
- 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 had 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.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- The lead inspector met with members of the trust board and of the local governing board, and the trust's chief executive officer.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with the principal. They also met with other senior and middle leaders, including those responsible for safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, sixth-form provision and personal development.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, science, history, technology and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also held curriculum discussions with leaders responsible for the arts and for religious education.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation regarding the support that pupils with SEND receive. They looked at the quality of the provision for pupils with SEND in lessons.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including minutes from governing board meetings and the school's self-evaluation.
- Inspectors looked at a range of information regarding behaviour. They observed the behaviour of pupils in classrooms and at social times.
- The views of pupils and staff who responded to Ofsted's surveys were considered.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents through the responses to Ofsted Parent View.

## Inspection team

Thomas Wraith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Steve Willacy

Ofsted Inspector

Peter Cole

Ofsted Inspector

Andrew Cummings

Ofsted Inspector

Gordon Watts

Ofsted Inspector

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