

# Inspection of a good school: Wrenn School

London Road, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire NN8 2DQ

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Inspection dates:

13 and 14 December 2023

## **Outcome**

Wrenn School continues to be a good school.

The principal of this school is Marianne Blake. This school is part of Creative Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Marc Jordan, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Abbie Rumbold.

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

The school is proud of its diverse community. Aspirations are high for all pupils, both academically and in terms of their cultural and personal development. At the heart of this is a strong focus on developing and rewarding pupils' character virtues. The school has successfully created a vibrant, inclusive culture where pupils succeed. Pupils feel happy and safe at school.

The school's 'BeKind@Wrenn' programme encourages positive relationships. Pupils value the respectful relationships between pupils as well as with staff. Pupils feel listened to and trust staff to deal with any concerns effectively. Most pupils behave well and appreciate the recent improvements in behaviour.

Pupils benefit from a plethora of opportunities and clubs which extend beyond the curriculum. These include being primary school ambassadors, undertaking outdoor education, learning sign language and taking part in a range of sports and music opportunities. These help pupils expand their interests and be active in the wider school community and beyond.

Parents and carers are positive about the school. They like its caring and supportive ethos. As one parent said, 'The staff are amazing, and do a fantastic job of looking after the children and tending to their needs, as well as teaching them and preparing them for the future.'

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

The school, along with the trust, have constructed a curriculum that is broad and ambitious. The order in which pupils are introduced to the most essential knowledge they should learn has been carefully considered. This helps pupils build on what they already know.

Pupils study a range of subjects at GCSE which meet their needs and interests. An increasing number of pupils are studying languages. Students in the sixth form are also offered a good range of subjects. These courses build well on the curriculum further down the school and, as a result, students achieve well. They appreciate the efforts that teachers make to help them.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language are well supported. The school identifies their specific needs and puts in place effective additional support. Staff make adaptations to teaching resources for pupils with SEND. This supports pupils to learn the curriculum successfully.

The school swiftly identifies pupils who may struggle to read when they join. Staff put in place bespoke support quickly. This ensures that pupils make rapid improvements in their fluency and confidence in reading. A range of strategies are in place to promote a love of reading, such as The Wrenn Read programme in tutor time.

Staff receive high-quality training. They use their subject knowledge to teach new concepts clearly. In most subjects, teachers use assessment strategies well to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and quickly address any misconceptions. Most teachers use effective questioning to deepen pupils' understanding, promote discussion and ensure that teaching builds on what pupils already know. As a result, most pupils achieve well. However, in a minority of subjects, the pupils find the work too easy. Consequently, some pupils do not achieve the school's bold ambitions for their academic achievement.

During lessons, most pupils are engaged and focused on their learning. Pupils rise to the expectations that teachers set for them. Pupils are confident to discuss their learning and offer ideas. However, the behaviour of a handful of pupils is less positive. There are instances of inconsiderate behaviour around the school site and in some lessons. The school is aware of this and is taking effective action to teach pupils the importance of behaving well, at all times.

Sixth-form students play a full part in the life of the school. They take on positive leadership opportunities, for example by acting as mentors to younger pupils, being reading buddies and running after-school clubs.

The school prioritises the wider personal development of pupils. Well-trained staff deliver a thoughtfully constructed programme of lessons and tutor time activities. Personal, social, health and economic education incorporates key knowledge and skills that help to deepen pupils' understanding of critical concepts such as healthy relationships and knife crime. A sharp focus on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is

skilfully embedded in the curriculum. Relationships and sex education are age appropriate. Pupils value the independent careers advice and guidance that they receive.

Staff are extremely supportive of the leadership of the school. They are proud to work here. They told inspectors that their workload and well-being are carefully considered. The school and the trust work together to provide training for staff. The local academy council challenges and supports leaders effectively.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Sometimes, the work given to pupils does not reflect the ambition of the curriculum. When this is the case, pupils cannot deepen their learning as far as they could. The school needs to ensure that work given to pupils more closely matches the intent of the ambitious curriculum.
- The policy and procedures for behaviour are newly introduced. While this has improved behaviour across the school, a small group of pupils continue to struggle to self-regulate. Leaders need to support these pupils and continue to help them meet the high expectations that have been set.

## **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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2018.

## **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 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>	139961
<b>Local authority</b>	North Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10298500
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<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>	1,452
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	149
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Abbie Rumbold
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Marc Jordan
<b>Principal</b>	Marianne Blake Laura Parker (acting principal)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.wrennschool.org.uk">www.wrennschool.org.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	9 and 10 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act, 2005

## Information about this school

- Since February 2023, the school has an acting principal.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider to meet the needs of 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

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This is 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 carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, geography and physical education. 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 looked at curriculum plans in some other subjects across the curriculum.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders of the school, members of staff and pupils. The lead inspector held a meeting with the chair of the trust, chair of the academy council and some leaders of the trust.
- 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 considered the views of parents, pupils and staff, including through responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

## Inspection team

Sue Vasey, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gary Carlile	Ofsted Inspector
John Craig	Ofsted Inspector

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