

# Inspection of Welbeck Academy

Flodden Street, Walker, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE6 2QL

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Inspection dates: 22 and 23 November 2023

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Early years provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Good

The headteacher of this school is Louise Saunders. This school is part of WISE Academies, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Zoe Carr, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Margaret Stephenson.

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

Pupils at Welbeck Academy enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. Welbeck is a place where pupils come first. Staff know each pupil well. This gives pupils a strong sense of belonging and a feeling of security. Pupils are proud of their school and their community. They are warm-hearted and understand what it means to be a good friend. Pupils behave well. Bullying is rare. If it does happen, then there are adults in school to whom pupils can talk.

Pupils have positive attitudes in lessons and are keen to learn. However, pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This is reflected in the most recent statutory assessment outcomes for pupils in key stages 1 and 2. Many pupils are not secure in the important skills of reading and writing, and pupils find it difficult to recall their prior learning. They do not know and remember enough of the wider curriculum that has been taught.

The school broadens pupils' experiences through a range of clubs and visits. For example, pupils have the opportunity to work with local writers and to take part in visits and theatre events.

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

Leaders are aspirational for their pupils. They help them to understand the opportunities available to them as they get older. The school has designed a curriculum that clearly maps out the most important knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn. Pupils have access to a wide range of knowledge. However, while the school is having a positive effect on pupils' learning in many areas, the high ambitions for pupils' learning are not consistently realised. Some activities chosen in wider curriculum subjects do not support pupils to remember and retain important knowledge over time. Some pupils, especially those who have arrived at the school at different points in time, cannot recall and use important learning in future lessons.

The school has ensured that staff deliver the phonics curriculum consistently to all pupils. Teachers make sure the books that children and pupils read match their phonics knowledge. Children begin to learn phonics as soon as they join the school. However, the phonics knowledge of some pupils in older year groups is not secure, which impacts on their ability to become fluent readers. While the school provides pupils with opportunities to practise and learn about the important skills they need to read and understand books, these skills are not firmly embedded in pupils' understanding.

In all subjects, the school has mapped out the subject-specific words that pupils will need to understand and use in different topics. However, pupils are not secure in their understanding of these words and how to use them in their own writing. For example, in geography, pupils in key stage 2 are unable to explain and use appropriately key words when talking about energy security and biomes.

The school places a strong emphasis on pupils' wider personal development. Pupils learn how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. They learn how to stay safe online. The school is committed to developing pupils' sense of responsibility. For example, pupils are encouraged to become anti-bullying ambassadors and to take part in the school parliament.

In the early years, teachers ensure that their planned activities support children to begin to build their knowledge and vocabulary. The learning environment is calm and purposeful. Staff have high expectations for how children should behave. Children happily play and learn together. Children know the systems and routines well. They persevere with tasks and show sustained concentration.

The school has clear processes to support the identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school is determined and tenacious in making sure that pupils with SEND get the right help. Pupils within the school's additional resource provision (ARP) receive a well-designed curriculum that meets their needs. This helps pupils to make progress and achieve the learning targets they have been set.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They value being part of the trust and the support provided on many levels. Staff benefit from the range of training opportunities provided by the trust to develop their skills in the classroom. Those responsible for governance know the school and its community well and work collaboratively with the school.

The school develops effective relationships with parents and carers. Parents are involved, for example, in workshops to support their child's reading. The school is seen as a point of support for the whole community it serves. Parents comment very positively on the support the school provides for their own well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Many pupils are not secure in the basic knowledge and skills to support fluent reading and effective writing. Many pupils do not gain the vocabulary and secure knowledge of grammar that they need. This slows the progress that they make. The school should work with teachers to further improve pupils' reading and writing skills to improve their learning across the curriculum.
- Teaching does not consistently enable pupils to remember important knowledge, particularly in the wider curriculum. As a result, pupils do not retain the knowledge and skills that they need to deepen their understanding. The school

should ensure that staff receive appropriate guidance to help pupils to remember the essential knowledge that they need.

## 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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 138577   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Newcastle upon Tyne  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10290213   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Academy converter  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 2 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 482  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | Board of trustees  |
| <b>Chair of trust</b>                      | Margaret Stephenson  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Louise Saunders  |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.welbeckacademy.co.uk">www.welbeckacademy.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Dates of previous inspection</b>        | 6 and 7 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005           |

## Information about this school

- The school joined the WISE Academies Trust in 2012.
- The school currently does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.
- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school clubs for pupils.
- The school has a local authority ARP for 12 pupils with speech and language needs and developmental language delay.
- A higher than usual number of pupils who speak English as an additional language have joined the school in recent years.
- The proportion of pupils in the school with SEND is higher than average.

## 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.
- 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.
- During the inspection, the inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders and staff. The lead inspector also met with members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector met with members of the board of trustees, including the chair of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer and regional hub lead for school improvement.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, English, science and art. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils and about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in another subject.
- Inspectors heard some pupils read with a trusted adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and in informal situations. They spoke to pupils about their experiences of school.
- Inspectors considered the response to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

## **Inspection team**

Anne Vernon, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Julie Hall

Ofsted Inspector

Tim Jenner

His Majesty's Inspector

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