

# Inspection of a good school: Westbridge Academy

London Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 2HE

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Inspection dates:

17 and 18 April 2024

## Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Emily Duque. This school is part of The Raedwald Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Angela Ransby, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Alan Whittaker.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils join Westbridge Academy having experienced significant disruption to their education. Their views of school are often negative, and their attendance has often been poor. Here, pupils receive an education that is precisely designed to meet their needs. Their aspirations are raised no end. Pupils receive exceptional support and guidance from adults who care deeply about them. This helps them to turn their lives around and get back on track. Pupils said they join the school as a 'nobody' but leave as a 'somebody', as they rediscover their identity, experiencing daily success.

Adults take time to get to know the needs of pupils and what makes them tick. Pupils learn a highly ambitious curriculum that is carefully matched to their needs. Adults set high expectations for pupils. Because of the expert guidance from adults, pupils meet these expectations, learn extremely well and return to mainstream education prepared for their next stage. They are guided to take responsibility and behave well.

Pupils learn to stay safe and develop essential life skills needed for adulthood through the highly effective personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme. By the time they leave, they are markedly better equipped to succeed in the world.

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

The curriculum is well developed to support pupils in relatively short-term placements in the school. The school manages the induction of pupils and their subsequent return to mainstream school exceptionally well. No stone is left unturned. This means adults have a detailed understanding of each pupil. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) as they join. The curriculum builds cumulatively and focuses sharply on ensuring pupils know more and can do more. Leaders have been deliberate and precise in their selection of the important knowledge that pupils need to learn to best help them return to their mainstream school.

There is a shared expectation amongst all adults that pupils will learn the school's extremely well-designed curriculum. Despite many pupils having had severely disjointed education experiences in the past, pupils learn and develop extremely well. This is because teachers have expert subject knowledge. They explain new ideas clearly, designing activities that help pupils use and apply their learning. Teachers regularly check to ensure pupils understand. If they do not, teachers skilfully adapt activities, especially for those pupils with SEND. The reading curriculum is carefully designed to expose pupils to a wide range of texts. The school has a well-established phonics programme for those pupils who need support in learning to read.

Pupils' attendance is high. The overwhelming majority of pupils improve their attendance from the time they start in school. The school keeps a sharp eye on absence and follows up on any concerns swiftly.

Behaviour in and around the school is upbeat. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning, attitudes that many did not have in the past. In lessons, pupils are resilient and keen to learn. They interact well with their friends and listen carefully to, and value, the opinions and views of others.

Pupils' wider development is well considered. The PSHE curriculum considers the short-term nature of the placements and ensures that important themes, such as online safety, mental health and exploitation, are covered in depth. Pupils benefit greatly from the careers guidance provided. They are well guided to plan their next stages in education, securing college or apprenticeship places, which are well suited to their needs and interests.

Staff are extremely well supported by leaders. They receive regular and relevant training to help keep their practice up to date. They benefit from the sharing of practice more widely across the trust.

Trustees and trust leaders are highly strategic in their thinking and actions. Trustees set the high standard that leaders maintain. They regularly check how the school is performing, using the detailed information they receive from leaders to guide their monitoring activities. All have a clear and accurate picture of the school's many strengths and aspects that need even further refinement.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## Background

When we have judged 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 to be good in September 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](#)' 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>	142808
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10323768
<b>Type of school</b>	Alternative provision
<b>School category</b>	Academy alternative provision converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	14 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	26
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Alan Whittaker
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Angela Ransby
<b>Headteacher</b>	Emily Duque
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.raedwaldtrust.com/westbridge-academy">www.raedwaldtrust.com/westbridge-academy</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Raedwald Trust.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.
- Pupils attend the school on a number of different 'pathways'. The 'springboard pathway' is a 19-week programme and places on this pathway are commissioned by local authorities. The school also commissions places directly from local mainstream schools. These pathways are referred to by the school as 'traded pathways'. These can be one-to-one tuition in the pupils' own school or small group provision at Westbridge Academy. Whichever pathway pupils are on, all pupils are dual enrolled with their home school.

## Information about this inspection

- 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, staff, and trustees. Inspectors also met with a range of leaders from the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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 reviewed a range of documents, including behaviour logs, attendance records, pupil records, records of trust and governor meetings, school development plans and school self-evaluation documents.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's staff or pupil surveys. Inspectors spoke with pupils on both days of the inspection to gather their views.

## **Inspection team**

Nathan Lowe, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Heather Hann

Ofsted Inspector

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