

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Windmill L.E.A.D. Academy

Sneinton Boulevard, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG2 4FZ

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 November 2024

Outcome

Windmill L.E.A.D. Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The head of school is Ruth Pickering. This school is part of L.E.A.D. Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Diana Owen, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Andy Buck. There is also an executive headteacher, Ross Middleton, who is responsible for this school and two others.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a warm and welcoming school. In the morning, pupils walk through the gates with smiles on their faces. They are greeted by caring staff who know them well. Pupils trust staff to keep them safe. The school sets high expectations for learning and behaviour. Pupils consistently demonstrate positive attitudes. They work hard and achieve well.

Pupils get on well together. They enjoy learning from each other, especially about the different languages, cultures and religions that exist in school. For example, on international day, pupils, parents and carers all come together to talk about their cultures and dress in clothes that represent their different national identities.

The school places a high priority on making sure that all pupils are well prepared for living in modern Britain. Pupils learn how to keep fit and cook healthy meals. They find out about modern technology and how to take care of the planet. Pupils are inspired by listening to visitors who come to the school from different walks of life and talk about their careers. Trips to local places of interest, as well as further afield, encourage pupils to think about the wider world.

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

The school's curriculum is ambitious. It is clear what the school wants pupils to learn in each subject. Knowledge is set out and taught in a way that helps pupils build on what they know already and make connections in their learning. The school identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) quickly. These pupils are well supported, for example learning activities are designed to meet their needs and help them to achieve well.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They explain concepts clearly. There is a high priority placed on building pupils' communication skills. This begins in the early years where staff use rhymes, songs and stories to develop children's vocabulary. Pupils across the school readily discuss their learning. In lessons, teachers provide lots of opportunities for pupils to practise what they have learned. They check pupils' work carefully and provide guidance to help pupils improve. However, in some subjects, the school has not established routines for checking how well pupils can remember what they have learned. This means that the school does not accurately identify when pupils have gaps in their understanding or misconceptions in these subjects.

Reading is a priority in the school. Strategies to help pupils learn to read work well. Pupils engage well with their phonics lessons. Staff check pupils' reading often. They make sure that learning and books are matched closely to pupils' stage of reading. The majority of pupils quickly learn to read. The school provides extra support for any pupils who fall behind to help them to catch up swiftly. Pupils in key stage 2 read often from interesting and challenging texts that are chosen carefully to complement the curriculum and broaden pupils' understanding of the world.

In the early years, children quickly develop positive learning habits. They follow established routines and participate keenly in activities. The curriculum is well-considered to match children's interests and provides them with the knowledge and skills they need to be prepared for the next stage. However, some of the planned activities do not support children's learning well enough so that they can progress through the curriculum.

The curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE) helps pupils learn how to lead healthy lives, for example by looking after their physical and mental health. Age-appropriate lessons teach pupils how to manage relationships and learn how to keep themselves safe, including online. Expert staff support pupils with SEND to develop their resilience and independence.

Pupils behave very well. They are guided by the school's values to be kind and respectful. Pupils who struggle to regulate their emotions and behaviours benefit from effective pastoral care that is provided by well-trained staff.

Most pupils attend school well. When this is not the case, the school works effectively with families, to improve pupils' attendance. As a result, the number of pupils who are persistently absent from school has fallen.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They value the way the school helps them to manage their workload. School leaders, with strong backing from the multi-academy

trust, have worked effectively to maintain, and in some areas improve, the school's provision. Governors know the school well and provide further support and challenge.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the routines for checking on how well pupils know and remember what they have been taught are not well established. As a result, in these subjects, staff sometimes miss pupils' misconceptions and there are some gaps in pupils' knowledge. The school needs to ensure that staff have the expertise they need to check what pupils know and can remember across the curriculum.
- Some of the activities that staff use with children in the early years are not thought through well enough. When this happens, children do not engage purposefully with activities and they do not learn as well as they should. The school needs to ensure that staff design effective learning activities that help children move through the curriculum.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 school to be good for overall effectiveness in January 2015.

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	139232
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	10339676
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	463
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andy Buck
CEO of the trust	Diana Owen
Headteacher	Ross Middleton (executive headteacher) Ruth Pickering (head of school)
Website	www.windmillacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The executive headteacher and head of school were appointed in September 2024.
- The school is part of L.E.A.D. Academy Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the assistant headteachers and other school leaders.
- The inspector met with the deputy chief executive officer and the director of schools from the trust. He also met with the co-chairs of governing body.

- The inspector met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke to some pupils. The inspector listened to some pupils read to a teacher.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 inspector spoke to a number of pupils and staff to hear their experiences of the school. The inspector also considered views expressed in Ofsted's staff survey and Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

John Spragg, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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