

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Wrenthorpe Academy

Imperial Avenue, Wrenthorpe, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF2 0LW

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 January 2025

Outcome

Wrenthorpe Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Lauren Penny. This school is part of Waterton 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 (CEO), Dave Dickinson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Stephen Johnson.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is proud to be a place 'where everyone is valued'. It fulfils this ambition well. The school's motto, 'We only get one life so let's learn how to live it well,' shines through the ambitious curriculum. It is reflected in the school's nurturing culture. Pupils are cared for in a warm, welcoming environment. Staff and pupils alike appreciate learning strategies to support their positive mental and physical health.

There are high expectations for all pupils. From the early years, pupils are confident to ask and answer questions, discuss their thinking and engage in debates. Teachers encourage them to be curious and resilient learners.

Pupils enjoy school and behave well. Bullying is rare. Staff deal with any incidents of poor behaviour effectively. The school is a safe, calm and inclusive environment. Pupils know that there are trusted staff to help them with any worries they may have.

Pupils experience various school clubs and activities. These include cooking, gardening, African drumming and sports competitions. They relish taking part in school trips linked to the curriculum. The school's breakfast and after-school clubs are well attended. They offer a range of activities. Older pupils particularly enjoy playing pool during these times.

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

Since the last inspection, leadership of the school has changed. A new curriculum has been successfully implemented. It is clear precisely what pupils should learn and when. There are frequent opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to revisit learning to help them remember. Teachers encourage pupils to use and apply their prior learning across different curriculum subjects.

Reading is a high priority. Skilled staff teach phonics well. Children in the early years begin to learn phonics from their first weeks in school. The school provides prompt support for pupils when needed. Pupils read books that match the sounds they know. The curriculum is designed to encourage pupils to practise their reading across different curriculum subjects. Pupils speak animatedly about books they enjoy. The school works closely with parents and carers to support them in helping their children with reading at home.

Children in the early years are nurtured in an exciting environment that is rich with learning experiences. The school places appropriate focus on developing children's early numeracy and literacy skills. For example, children develop the physical skills they need to prepare them well for early writing.

The school identifies and supports the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities well. Teachers adapt learning and provide suitable extra resources to meet pupils' individual needs when needed. The school works closely with parents to help pupils take an active part in school life and to achieve their best.

The school has recently reviewed and strengthened the way teachers check what pupils know and can remember of the curriculum. Prior to this, leaders identified that teachers' checks of pupils' progress in mathematics and some aspects of English were not as accurate as they should be. This contributed to some lower than anticipated outcomes for pupils at the end of Year 6 in the last academic year. The school now has suitable procedures in place to check how well pupils are learning the curriculum, but these are in the early stages of implementation.

Attendance is high. Suitably thorough procedures are in place to address pupils' absence. Leaders highlight the importance of regular attendance to parents. The school provides parents with the necessary information to explain the negative impact of persistent absence on pupils' education.

Pupils' personal development is at the heart of everything the school does. There is an almost palpable determination to equip pupils with the skills to cope in life. Pupils are prepared well for life beyond school. They benefit from strong pastoral care. They learn how to recognise and cope with different feelings and emotions. They can explain how their brain responds to these and why. They enjoy their 'mindful moments' and appreciate the benefits of writing in their journals. Pupils learn about life in modern Britain, covering diversity and the importance of equality. They develop respect for others, including for those in different types of relationships. They learn about potential risks when online and in the community. Pupils like holding positions of responsibility, such as playground

leaders. They enjoy residential experiences and musical performances. These include participating in a concert with other schools across Sheffield.

The trust and governors have secure and purposeful oversight of the school. Staff speak highly of leaders' support for their professional development, workload and welfare. Parents typically praise the way staff go 'above and beyond to value every child'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Until recently, assessment of some aspects of the curriculum has not been precise. Leaders did not have an accurate picture of pupils' progress. The school should ensure that its improved approaches to teachers' assessment of what pupils know and can do is used accurately and effectively, so that all pupils achieve the best possible outcomes.

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 predecessor school, Wrenthorpe Primary School, to be good for overall effectiveness in April 2014.

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	144237
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10370377
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	309
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Stephen Johnson
CEO of the trust	Dave Dickinson
Headteacher	Lauren Penny
Website	www.wrenthorpeacademy.org
Dates of previous inspection	3 and 4 March 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Waterton Academy Trust.
- A new headteacher was appointed in September 2023. A new deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2024.
- The school provides breakfast and after-school care.
- The school does not currently make use of alternative provision.

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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, some subject leaders, the head of teaching and learning for the trust, the special educational needs coordinator, the education welfare officer for the trust and the senior administration officer.
- The inspector met with four members of the academy standards committee, including the chair and the CEO and deputy CEO of the Waterton Academy Trust.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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' interest first.
- The inspector spoke to some parents informally at the start of the school day and met with some pupils and staff.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and Ofsted's surveys for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Stephanie Innes-Taylor, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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