

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



7 February 2025

Nathaniel Wilson  
Headteacher  
Wixams Academy  
Green Lane  
Wixams  
Bedford  
Bedfordshire  
MK42 6BA

Dear Mr Wilson

### **Monitoring inspection of a school not in a category of concern of Wixams Academy**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 8 January 2025, on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and took place because the school meets the monitoring threshold as set out in the [Monitoring Inspection Handbook](#).

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's key and (where applicable) provision judgements, but to identify and report on the school's progress. It is to highlight to the school and parents any improvements that school leaders have made since the school's previous graded inspection.

During the inspection, I discussed with you and the chief executive officer (CEO), the chair of the board of trustees, the education director for the trust, senior leaders and staff the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. I also visited lessons, spoke with pupils, considered documents regarding the curriculum and the school's improvement plans and considered samples of pupils' work. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

**Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but some aspects of the school need further improvement.**

## **Main findings**

In April 2024, you took up your post as headteacher. Since then, you have appointed some new leaders and staff.

Working with trust leaders, the school has put in place a suitable curriculum for pupils in key stage 3. Pupils now have access to a broader and more balanced curriculum.

Since the previous inspection, the school has started building a common understanding of the way teachers should teach the curriculum. The school has started using these new approaches with varied success. When teachers effectively apply the school's teaching 'principles', pupils generally engage and learn well. These principles, however, are not applied with consistent effectiveness across the school. As a result, pupils' engagement and quality of learning are not consistently positive across the curriculum.

The school has clarified ways staff should check what pupils know and understand. Some teachers have become adept at using these methods. However, it remains the case that teachers do not consistently recognise when a pupil finds something hard and subsequently, needs extra help. This means that teachers do not consistently adapt learning activities or provide support that help pupils who are struggling, including those with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The school's work to support pupils who do not read well is starting to make a positive difference. However, the school's approach remains imprecise. This is because teachers of subjects other than reading are not aware of what happens in the reading support sessions. As a result, teachers do not give these pupils sufficient opportunities to practise what they have learned. This leads to pupils forgetting elements of what they have been taught.

Leaders and members of governance have in place a well-considered school improvement plan. With the support of the trust, the school provides training that is contributing towards the necessary improvements. Leaders and members of governance have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They work well with external specialists to gain the expertise they need to lead and govern the school effectively. Trustees have systems in place to ensure that leaders are held accountable for the quality of the school's provision.

The school now has a clear behaviour policy in place that pupils and staff understand. Because staff follow the policy consistently, pupils' conduct is positive in lessons and during social times. However, in lessons, some pupils do not fully engage in their learning. Often, this happens when teachers do not adapt learning activities well enough to suit pupils' needs. When this happens, teachers do not routinely notice when pupils are distracted. Consequently, pupils are not redirected, so they do not learn as well as they could.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the CEO, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Bedford Borough. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Al Mistrano  
**His Majesty's Inspector**