

Wigston Academy

Station Road, Wigston, Leicestershire LE18 2DT

Inspection dates

25–26 September 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Provisional information indicates that pupils' attainment across a range of subjects in 2018 is not consistently good. Attainment in vocational courses has not been high enough.
- Until recently, the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities has not been good enough. This is now improving.
- Some pupils do not make the progress in lessons of which they are capable. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils are able to achieve.
- Some subject leaders have been slow to take on the actions needed to improve the quality of teaching and pupil outcomes.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good across a range of different subjects.
- The school's new marking and feedback policy is not consistently followed by staff.
- Sometimes, teachers move the learning on too quickly before checking that all pupils are secure in their understanding.
- In some classes, pupils' attitudes towards their learning are less positive because the teaching does not engage pupils' interests.
- Teachers do not consistently use information about pupils' ability to ensure that work is set at the right level.

The school has the following strengths

- The leadership provided by the headteacher is valued and respected by staff. The culture and morale of the school are positive.
- The leadership of behaviour and personal development is highly effective. Attendance and behaviour have improved rapidly.
- The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good.
- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is fit for purpose, including a highly effective programme for alternative provision.
- As a result of improved leadership, the quality of teaching is improving. Current pupils are beginning to make more rapid progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and improve pupils' progress by ensuring that:
 - teachers accurately and consistently use assessment information so that learning activities are matched to the needs and abilities of pupils
 - teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do so that all pupils routinely complete work that is appropriately challenging
 - teachers consistently check pupils' understanding before moving learning on to the next stage
 - teachers plan learning that is appropriately pitched and that engages pupils' interest and enthusiasm so that their attitudes to learning are consistently positive
 - all teachers follow the school's policy on providing effective feedback.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - further developing the role of subject leaders to ensure that they are fully effective in improving pupils' progress and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher leads the school well. His leadership is valued and respected by staff. Strongly supported by senior leaders and governors, he communicates a clear vision for the future success of the school. The headteacher is equally strongly supported by the trust in driving school improvement. The culture and morale of the school are very positive.
- Leaders have a strong vision for the school and this is underpinned by a comprehensive development plan. Priorities are well defined and supported by clear criteria for measuring success. Leaders and governors closely monitor the progress of key developments. Leaders and governors have ensured that the school has the capacity to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes rapidly.
- The leadership of personal development and behaviour is highly effective. Supported by a committed pastoral team, including the appointment of a new attendance leader, both behaviour and attendance have improved significantly and rapidly. Leaders work collaboratively to support the welfare of pupils, particularly those who are looked after, disadvantaged or have SEN and/or disabilities.
- The provision for pupils to learn about, and to explore their understanding of, spiritual, moral, social, and cultural issues is strong. There are wide ranging opportunities for pupils to explore their learning, including their understanding of fundamental British values. For example, pupils learn about social injustice and explore different faiths.
- Pupils who follow an alternative curriculum pathway, both on and off the school site, are very well catered for. Leaders are highly effective in ensuring that the courses are appropriate for the future aspirations of the pupils involved. Regular checks are made to ensure that they attend, behave well and make good progress. Pupils who attend Abington House are well supported in their learning of salon skills and bike maintenance, for example.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and supportive of pupils' needs and interests. Leaders evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and amend it where needed. For example, they have amended the vocational and academic qualifications offered to ensure that pupils make better progress.
- Leaders and governors are focused on addressing the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. The appointment of a new senior leader has strongly assisted the drive for improvement. A well-planned and coordinated programme of professional development for teachers has been implemented and the opportunities provided by this are well received by staff. Leaders' information indicates an improving picture of teaching and learning. However, it is too soon to see the full impact of recent initiatives on pupils' outcomes.
- The school uses additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils well. The introduction of 'Room 39', for example, provides a safe space within which pupils receive additional mentoring, support and space to socialise. This has had a positive impact on relationships, and on the attendance and behaviour of disadvantaged pupils.

- Funding to support pupils in Year 7 who enter the school with levels of English and mathematics below age-related expectations is spent wisely. A range of learning strategies is helping these pupils to catch up with their peers quickly.
- The leadership for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is effective. A clear emphasis is placed on inclusive support, complemented by meticulous monitoring of social and academic progress. Relationships are positive, and staff engage purposefully with parents and external agencies. In addition, the effective leadership of the Excel Centre at the school for pupils with autism is helping to give these pupils access to mainstream education.
- A very carefully planned and delivered programme of careers education has been implemented from Year 7 to the end of Year 11 to support pupils with their next steps in education, employment or training. As a result, all pupils have secured suitable placements by the end of key stage 4.
- Leaders work hard to ensure the smooth transition of pupils into Year 7 from primary schools. Pupils say that they have settled in well, and parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, agreed.
- Since the reorganisation of the school into an 11 to 16 academy, leaders have benefited from the highly effective support of an independent school advisor, provided by the trust. This support has been successful in enabling leaders to sharpen processes to ensure consistency and accountability, particularly in helping to bring about improvements in the behaviour of pupils.
- Senior leaders work closely with subject leaders to check the quality of teaching and the performance of pupils. Recently, this closer monitoring is beginning to bring about improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. However, leaders' actions have yet to ensure that outcomes for pupils and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are consistently good.

Governance of the school

- The governance of the school is effective.
- Governors' vision for the school, and that of the trust, is ambitious. They are rightly keen to ensure that outcomes for pupils rapidly improve.
- Governors are skilled and experienced. They are kept well informed about the developments in the school and understand its strengths and areas for further development. For example, they know about the positive impact of the new school behaviour strategy in reducing the number of exclusions over the last year. They also know about the positive impact the pupil premium strategy is beginning to have in improving the attendance of disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors hold senior leaders rigorously to account. They have established an effective committee structure and governor links to support the monitoring of the school's development priorities. This includes an overview of safeguarding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- The training of staff and governors in safeguarding is thorough. A team of staff who are appropriately skilled support the designated safeguarding lead effectively. Leaders work tenaciously to ensure that pupils receive the right support, including working with outside agencies and with parents. The care for pupils who are vulnerable is sensitive, thorough and well documented.
- All staff understand what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil's well-being. School records are well organised, detailed and demonstrate that swift action is taken when necessary to keep pupils safe.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They can easily identify which adults they need to go to if they have any worries or concerns. The majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's survey agree that their children feel safe in school and are well cared for.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent between and within different subject areas.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high enough. In some lessons, pupils complete less work than they are capable of and teachers do not consistently challenge this.
- Teachers do not consistently use information about pupils' prior attainment to ensure that work is set at the right level. When this occurs, pupils' concentration wanes and attitudes are less positive.
- Teachers do not consistently ensure that pupils respond to, or learn from, feedback in line with the school's newly developed policy. As a result, some pupils are not always sure how to improve or extend their learning.
- In some lessons, teachers move the learning on too quickly before checking that all pupils have understood. This slows the progress that some pupils make.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge, and when pupils make the most progress it is because this is used effectively to engage pupils and stimulate their thinking. For example, inspectors saw effective questioning in English, history and physical education.
- Pupils are keen to do well. They follow instructions from their teachers promptly. For example, in a science lesson the teacher had carefully structured the learning so that pupils were fully engaged and supported in their ability to deepen their understanding and application of technical terms and concepts about digestion.
- There are strengths in the teaching of English. In this subject, a combination of challenging tasks and effective assessment is helping pupils to make better progress.
- Subject leaders have recently improved the quality of teacher resources and planning materials, providing teachers with greater support and direction. Teachers and leaders have evidence that this aspect of the school's work will lead to rapid improvement.
- A broad range of extra-curricular activities enables pupils to extend their learning in different ways. Pupils say that they are very positive about these opportunities.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- There is a well-coordinated and planned programme of learning for personal development and this is very effectively delivered in global citizenship lessons, tutor time and assembly. A variety of themes is covered, including online safety, road safety and anti-bullying.
- Pastoral care is a strength of the school. Pupils and parents say that they appreciate and value the care and support provided in meeting the needs of individual pupils. This includes, for example, access to a school nurse and school counsellor when pupils feel they need extra support.
- School records show that the number of incidents of bullying is low, and pupils say that they are confident that any concerns would be quickly and effectively handled by staff. A large majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey agreed.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively and pupils are introduced to a broad range of themes. For example, pupils learn about social injustice, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) issues and mental health. Pupils' cultural understanding is well developed during global citizenship lessons, such as the exploration of different faiths and discussions about topical current affairs.
- Fundamental British values are positively promoted through a range of activities. These include learning about radicalisation and extremism from a visiting theatre company, and using drama to help pupils understand the causes and impact of radicalisation.
- Pupils benefit from a very carefully thought-out and planned curriculum for careers education, which covers all year groups. Together with access to impartial careers advice, all Year 11 pupils in 2018 secured places in further education, employment or training which met their needs and interests. The advice and guidance pupils receive about future opportunities are a strong feature of this school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good, as demonstrated by their calm conduct around the school site. They wear their uniform smartly and are punctual in getting to lessons.
- A new approach to managing behaviour has recently been implemented and this is used consistently by staff. As a result, most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
- The proportion of fixed-term and repeat exclusions has been high in the past, but this has decreased significantly within the last year. Leaders' actions have successfully improved pupils' poor behaviour and conduct. This includes a well-led and supervised behaviour management resource and a well-considered alternative curriculum programme, both of which provide effective support for pupils at risk of disengaging from learning.

- Pupils who attend alternative curriculum provision, both on and away from the school site, are closely monitored by school leaders. The school ensures that they follow appropriate courses, are safe, and that they attend and behave well.
- Overall attendance has improved and is now in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school has also decreased. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are regularly absent from school remains high, but this figure is also improving.
- Where teaching fails to meet pupils' needs, some pupils do not exhibit positive learning behaviour.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- At the end of key stage 4 in 2018, attainment across a range of subjects was not consistently good. However, attainment in mathematics, Spanish and religious education was stronger.
- In 2018, attainment outcomes were low for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Leaders' information indicates that the progress made by current pupils in key stage 4 is improving. However, not all pupils are making consistently strong progress across the curriculum.
- Over the past year, school records indicate that progress has improved for current pupils in key stage 3. The introduction of a new target and assessment strategy has positively supported this. Disadvantaged pupils are also beginning to make better progress.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are beginning to make better progress. The enhanced resource base for pupils with autism is particularly successful in adapting learning to help pupils make better progress.
- The Year 7 catch-up funding is having a positive impact. This programme supports the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, their confidence and resilience. As a result, these pupils are making a positive start to their time at the school.
- There are effective support and guidance in ensuring that pupils are well prepared for the future. In 2018, all pupils secured appropriate places for their next steps in education, employment or training.

School details

Unique reference number	137984
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10048184

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,330
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mrs Pauline Munro
Headteacher	Mr Michael Wilson
Telephone number	01162 881 228
Website	www.wigstonacademy.org
Email address	admin@wigstonacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	7 May 2014

Information about this school

- The school has emerged from a period of local restructuring, following the merging of two former middle schools. This has resulted in the addition of a new key stage 4. 2018 was the first year of GCSE outcomes for pupils in Year 11.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium funding is broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average. The school has a specialist resource base for 12 pupils who have autism.
- A small number of pupils attend curriculum provision off-site. The provision used is provided by the Leicestershire Behaviour Partnership. Additionally, a small number of pupils attend Abington House and follow a school-based alternative curriculum pathway.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out under Section 5 of the Education Act 2005.
- Inspectors observed 49 parts of lessons across the school, in a range of subjects. Inspectors also visited tutor time and an assembly.
- Inspectors spoke with five groups of pupils across all year groups.
- Inspectors met with a range of school leaders, including the headteacher and chief executive officer of Wigston Academies Trust, and senior leaders responsible for teaching and learning, behaviour and personal development. Inspectors also spoke with the special educational needs coordinator, the designated safeguarding lead, the leader for careers, and pastoral and subject leaders. A meeting was held with three governors, and the lead inspector also held a telephone conversation with the chair of the governing body.
- A range of documentation was examined, including the school's self-evaluation; pupils' performance information; the minutes of meetings of the governing body; behaviour logs; curriculum plans; and school policies in relation to safeguarding, behaviour and assessment.
- Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work across a wide range of curriculum subjects.
- Inspectors evaluated the 59 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and the 82 responses to Ofsted's school staff survey.

Inspection team

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Linda Thompson	Ofsted Inspector
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Alison Davies	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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