

Welland Park Academy

Welland Park Road, Market Harborough, Leicestershire LE16 9DR

Inspection dates

2–3 July 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Senior leaders and governors act with integrity and a strong sense of moral purpose. Their priority is to make the best decisions for the pupils in their care. The recent addition of a new key stage has been managed successfully.
- Leaders are ambitious for the pupils and staff. A positive culture of aspiration permeates most aspects of school life. Many pupils achieve well academically and in their personal development.
- Senior leaders have an incisive understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their plans for improvement are precise and focused.
- The pastoral care of pupils is a notable strength of the school. Pupils feel well supported, safe and happy. Most pupils thrive. Safeguarding is effective.
- Leaders are committed to ensuring that pupils can follow a broad and balanced curriculum.
- While subject leaders are very positive about their roles, there are inconsistencies in how rigorously they monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility.
- Leaders provide pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) with additional support. However, leaders, including governors, do not have a secure oversight of the provision for these pupils.
- Pupils in key stage 3 and key stage 4 make good progress in most subject areas, including English and mathematics.
- Most teachers are enthusiastic and have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Pupils are confident, resilient learners, who are not afraid to make mistakes.
- Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to plan clear sequences of learning. This is particularly the case in mathematics.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is very well promoted and supported by a well-thought-out curriculum.
- Pupils are very well prepared for their next steps in education or training.
- Pupils conduct themselves extremely well in and around the school. They have excellent attitudes to learning. Bullying is rare.
- Teachers do not all follow the school's policy on feedback. Not all pupils reflect on their learning and improve their work.
- Some teachers do not make effective use of questioning to explore and deepen pupils' understanding.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are too often absent or temporarily excluded from school, compared with their peers.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - leaders and governors having a clear strategic overview of the quality of the provision for pupils with SEND, with precise plans for improvement, so that these pupils achieve as well as possible
 - further developing the skills of subject leaders so that they can continue to improve the quality and consistency of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that all teachers:
 - make consistent use of the school's system for providing pupils with feedback, so that pupils act readily on the advice as to how to improve their work
 - develop their questioning skills so that they consistently check and deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - reducing the proportion of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND who are regularly absent or temporarily excluded from school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal is a leader of great integrity, being a significant inspiration for, and influence on, those around her. As a very strong role model for staff and pupils alike, she is tenacious in her pursuit for ensuring that all those for whom she is responsible are nurtured and encouraged. Ably supported by an increasingly skilful senior leadership team, she has created a school culture where pupils' aspirations and ambitions can be realised.
- Stability of senior leadership and governance over time has provided the school with much-needed consistency and continuity, as the school has gone through a period of significant change. As a result, the addition of key stage 4 has been managed very effectively, with all current year 9 pupils choosing to remain at the school for their future GCSE studies.
- Senior leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses extremely well. Their evaluation of the provision is accurate and incisive, allowing leaders and those responsible for governance to identify future priorities precisely. Far from being complacent, their plans for improvements are well focused, including clear success criteria, and forming part of a longer-term strategic vision for the school. Staff know the school's priorities and are wholly supportive.
- The pastoral care for pupils is a considerable strength. A well-honed team of staff ensure that no pupil is left feeling unsupported. Despite growing as a school, it is notable that most staff know all of the pupils by name. As one parent described, 'The staff go above and beyond.' Pupils feel like they belong, are cared for and are valued. As a result, most pupils attend regularly, behave well, achieve highly and develop respect for others.
- Leaders are aspirational for all pupils, irrespective of their background. They were proactive in identifying weaknesses in pupils' outcomes in 2018 and planning for improvements, some of which are already bearing fruit. Leaders set pupils ambitious targets and track their progress closely. They are confident in the accuracy of teachers' assessments. As a result of this increased rigour, most pupils continue to make at least good progress.
- Leaders' plans to use additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils and those Year 7 pupils who have fallen behind with their literacy and numeracy are detailed. Recently, more rigorous monitoring has ensured that leaders evaluate the impact of this spending more closely, so that their plans can be modified accordingly. That said, the needs of disadvantaged pupils in key stage 3 are not as well considered in leaders' plans as other pupils to ensure that these pupils receive sufficient support.
- Subject leaders are very positive about their roles and are well supported by senior leaders. They work effectively with each other, sharing best practice, while senior leaders hold them increasingly to account for pupils' outcomes in their areas of responsibility. However, some subject leaders do not consistently and rigorously monitor the quality and impact of teaching and learning in their departments to ensure that teachers have a keen focus on improving pupils' outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.

- Leaders provide pupils with SEND with additional support to aid their learning. Staff receive detailed information about these pupils' needs, while additional adults are given regular training. However, leaders do not monitor the provision for these pupils closely enough to ensure that the additional funding for these pupils is used to maximum effect. While pupils with more complex SEND are successful, due to detailed planning to meet their specific needs, this lack of strategic oversight has led to some pupils with SEND not making the progress that they should.
- Leaders encourage staff to reflect regularly on their own teaching practice so that their individual training needs can be identified. Leaders recognise that their work to monitor the quality of teaching and learning has not been as rigorous as it should have been. More recently, leaders have implemented new strategies to improve both the quality and consistency of teaching across all subject areas. However, it is too early to evaluate the impact of these plans.
- Leaders are committed to pupils being able to study a range of different subjects at key stage 4. When necessary, leaders provide pupils with a specific programme of study to meet pupils' needs more closely. Many extra-curricular activities enrich pupils' learning experiences, while the recently introduced 'house' system provides pupils with one of many leadership opportunities.
- Leaders provide pupils with a comprehensive programme of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, through citizenship lessons and assemblies. As part of this, pupils develop a detailed appreciation of British values.

Governance of the school

- Governors are experienced, committed and enthusiastic. They are wholly supportive of school leaders and know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. Their wide-ranging skills provide leaders with invaluable assistance when bringing about improvements and managing significant change within the school.
- Governors understand their roles and responsibilities well. Each governor makes regular visits to the school to meet with leaders, discuss their work and check on the quality of the provision. As a result, governors are fully informed, receiving timely updates regarding leaders' progress against all aspects of the school improvement plan.
- Governors have received training recently that is pertinent to the addition of the new key stage. For instance, governors understand progress measures for key stage 4 pupils well and are able to hold leaders to account effectively for the achievement of these pupils.
- Governors provide leaders with appropriate and healthy challenge in relation to, for example, pupils' absence and additional funding for some groups of pupils. However, governors are not holding leaders to account well enough for the impact of additional government funding on the outcomes of pupils with SEND.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- A large team of staff are trained in safeguarding the pupils. They understand the pupils' needs extremely well and work together closely to keep pupils safe.
- Leaders carry out all the necessary checks before an adult begins to work or volunteer at the school. They have responded readily to recommendations following a recent audit of their safeguarding and recruitment practices.
- Leaders take timely and effective action to support pupils about whose welfare they have a concern. When necessary, they are tenacious in ensuring that pupils receive the help necessary from external agencies. Pupils' safeguarding records are well kept and secure.
- Leaders ensure that staff receive appropriate training and regular updates, including in relation to safeguarding risks in the local area. Staff are acutely aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. They are vigilant and recognise any possible warning signs that indicate a pupil may be at risk. Staff are confident that leaders will respond swiftly to any concerns that they raise.
- Almost all parents and carers who expressed a view on Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, agreed that their children were safe and happy at the school.
- Members of the governing body have a secure understanding of their safeguarding duties. They monitor leaders' work regularly to ensure that pupils are kept safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is consistently strong in many subjects. Most teachers are enthusiastic about their subjects and have high expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving. In response, many pupils aspire to success.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and use it to good effect, for instance, to inspire Year 10 pupils to write a computer programme, or to encourage Year 7 pupils to interpret a poem using their skills of inference. In these lessons, teachers' use of subject-specific language is commonplace and it becomes part of most pupils' lexicon. Such in-depth knowledge inspires pupils to be inquisitive and want to find out more.
- Inspectors observed nothing but strong, positive relationships between staff and pupils. In such an environment, pupils are responsive to teachers' requests and are keen to offer their ideas. They become confident and resilient learners, who understand that making mistakes is part of the learning process. As one pupil declared, 'We are not made to feel stupid for getting something wrong.'
- The quality of teaching in mathematics is a consistent strength. In this subject, skilled teachers use well-planned sequential learning to provide pupils with an appropriate amount of challenge. For example, in Year 10 mathematics, pupils synthesised their understanding of trigonometry and Pythagoras' theorem to move their learning on to the next stage. In this subject, most pupils engage readily and achieve well.
- Many teachers use opportunities to reinforce pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. For instance, Y8 pupils explored issues related to climate change in an extended written piece in geography, while use of experiment data in Year 10 science required an understanding of different types of graphs. However, the application of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is not yet fully developed across the curriculum.
- Some teachers ask pertinent questions to clarify pupils' understanding and deepen

their learning. In these instances, rather than accepting the first answer, teachers persist in probing pupils' responses, allowing them thinking time in order to unpick their understanding. However, all too often, teachers are not as effective as they could be in their use of questions to secure strong pupil progress.

- Some teachers allow pupils time to reflect on, and improve, their work in line with the school's assessment and feedback strategy. Although this strategy is being used to good effect by some teachers, too often they fail to encourage pupils consistently to improve their work in response to the teachers' guidance.
- While the needs of pupils with SEND are being met adeptly by some teachers, with skilled support from additional adults, this is not always the case. Leaders do not monitor and track the provision for these pupils closely enough to be confident that support received by these pupils is having the desired impact.
- Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in a small minority of subjects mean that not all pupils are making the progress that they should. For example, while many teachers challenge pupils effectively and ensure that the needs of all pupils are being met, this is not always the case.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are proud to be a member of the school and want to achieve well. Staff are supportive of their aspirations and create a climate in which all can be successful.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive, across all years and different groups of pupils. They enjoy mutually respectful relationships with adults and cooperate very effectively with each other in lessons.
- All pupils who spoke with inspectors felt well cared for. They said that they knew how to access support should they need to. Most notably, pupils welcomed the help they received from adults working in the 'access to the curriculum' unit.
- Pupils feel safe at school. They are taught effectively about how to reduce the risks they may encounter, including online.
- The school is very inclusive. Both pupils and staff are very aware of, and welcome, each other's needs and differences. Any use of derogatory language is infrequent and quickly dealt with.
- Pupils receive a rich diet of SMSC education through their citizenship lessons. A well-planned programme ensures that the guidance pupils receive is relevant to their age and the school's context. Pupils willingly share their reflections and are respectful of others' views. As one pupil explained, 'We find out things about the world that we wouldn't know otherwise', while another stated, 'I think this is the most important lesson that we do.'
- Leaders ensure that pupils' mental health and emotional needs are provided for sufficiently well. For instance, 'drop-in' sessions are available to support pupils experiencing increased anxiety during examination periods.

- Pupils are very well prepared for their next steps, receiving individual guidance about the different options available to them. An increased variety of destinations are being sought by pupils at the end of Year 11.
- A vast majority of parents responding to the online survey, Parent View, said that their children are happy and safe at school, and well looked after.
- A small number of pupils access part of their education through an alternative provider. Leaders ensure that progress and welfare of these pupils is monitored closely. Their success is indicated by their good attendance and progress, and the quality of the training placements they secure when they leave school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Very few pupils are late to school each day. Pupils enter school very calmly and ready to learn.
- Pupils conduct themselves extremely well, both in lessons and during unstructured times. Pupils of all ages socialise and get on very well together. Almost all staff who responded to Ofsted's online survey said that pupils' behaviour was at least good.
- Bullying is very rare according to pupils. Pupils have a high awareness of anti-bullying strategies and know that there is someone they could talk to if they have any concerns.
- Attendance is slightly below the national average, particularly for pupils with SEND. The attendance of older pupils is not as good as that of younger pupils.
- The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school has declined notably, as a direct result of leaders' closely focused strategies. However, this is not the case for pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, who are absent from school too often.
- While the proportion of pupils excluded from school remains relatively low compared with the national average, it is beginning to increase, most notably for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2018, pupils' outcomes overall were broadly in line with the national average, including for pupils of different abilities. Current pupils in Year 11 are making similarly good progress.
- Pupils make strong progress in mathematics and English. In 2018, pupils' progress in these subjects was in the top 20% nationally. Current pupils in Year 10 and Year 11 continue to achieve well.
- In 2018, pupils' progress in the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects was strong. Current pupils in Year 10 and Year 11 continue to make good progress in these subjects, including science, modern foreign languages and humanities. However, the proportion of pupils eligible for the English Baccalaureate is declining.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well across many areas of the curriculum. Leaders

monitor the progress of these pupils closely. Gaps between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils are beginning to close at key stage 4. However, improvements in the progress of these pupils are not yet as sustained at key stage 3.

- Leaders promote high aspirations for all pupils' futures and prepare them well for a range of different opportunities. In 2018, all Year 11 pupils moved on to appropriate places of further education or training.
- In key stage 3, most pupils make good progress across many areas of the curriculum. This is supported by the work in pupils' workbooks. Nonetheless, there are some inconsistencies between subjects and between different groups of pupils. In particular, the progress of boys is not as strong as that of girls.
- Some pupils with SEND make good progress across a range of subjects. For instance, pupils with more complex SEND are successful because they benefit from bespoke packages of support. Yet the needs of pupils with SEND are not always met sufficiently well. As a result, not all of these pupils make the progress that they should from their starting points.
- Leaders recognise the importance of promoting reading across the curriculum. However, there is not a consistent emphasis on developing a culture of reading to ensure that all pupils become capable and confident readers.

School details

Unique reference number	137170
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10087308

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	967
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	David Hedley
Principal	Julie McBrearty
Telephone number	01858 464795
Website	http://wellandparkacademy.co.uk
Email address	mcbreartyj@wellandparkacademy.com
Date of previous inspection	9–10 May 2012

Information about this school

- Welland Park Academy is an average-sized secondary school.
- The school became an academy in February 2012.
- In September 2016, the school accepted Year 10 pupils for the first time. The school had its first set of GCSE examination results for Year 11 pupils in August 2018.
- The principal took up the position in September 2012. In September 2016, a new vice-principal was been appointed and more recently two new assistant principals have joined the senior leadership team.
- There is a growing number of pupils on the school's roll.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND, including those with an education, health and care plan, is below average.

- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school uses the following alternative providers for a small number of pupils:
Leicestershire Education Business Company Ltd, The Way of the Horse and Enstruct.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 44 lessons across a wide range of subjects in both key stage 3 and key stage 4. Many of these lessons were jointly observed with senior leaders. Inspectors also observed tutor time.
- Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work covering a range of subjects, abilities and year groups, including the work of pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work in lessons.
- The lead inspector held a range of meetings, including with the principal, leaders responsible for safeguarding, the vice-principal who has oversight of pupils' outcomes, and two members of the governing body, including the vice-chair.
- Inspectors held further meetings with the leaders responsible for behaviour and attendance, teaching and learning, and the curriculum. Inspectors also met with the coordinator of provision for pupils with SEND, the leader responsible for coordinating SMSC education, the leader of careers, subject and pastoral leaders, and a group of staff.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, before school and during breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors spoke formally with pupils from key stage 3 and key stage 4, and a group of pupils with SEND. Inspectors also spoke with other pupils informally.
- An inspector heard a small number of Year 7 pupils read.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents relating to the school's provision, including: self-evaluation and improvement planning; minutes of meetings of the governing body; plans related to additional government funding; behaviour, attendance and exclusion records; information about the attainment and progress of all pupils; safeguarding; and information on the school's website. The lead inspector also checked the school's single central register and the school's system for recruiting staff.
- Inspectors evaluated the 162 responses to Parent View, including 109 free-text responses.
- Inspectors analysed the 61 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils.

Inspection team

Rachel Tordoff, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Di Mullan	Her Majesty's Inspector
Steve Lewis	Ofsted Inspector
Jenny Brown	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019