

Weston Favell Academy

Booth Lane South, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN3 3EZ

Inspection dates

2–3 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
16 to 19 study programmes	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Governance by the trustees of The Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust is weak. As a result, leaders have not received appropriate challenge or support. This has significantly hampered the school's improvement.
- Pupils have underachieved for too long across a range of subjects, particularly at key stage 4. The pace of improvement has not been swift enough.
- Leaders' use of pupil premium spending and Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up funding has not been effective. Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, fail to make the progress of which are they capable in too many subject areas.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not receive effective enough support. Consequently, many of these pupils do not make the progress that they should.
- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, fail to achieve at the appropriate levels.
- The quality of subject leadership is too variable. Standards in some subject areas remain too low, particularly, but not exclusively, within science, geography and history.
- In many cases, teachers' planning does not address the learning needs of pupils well enough, particularly the most able pupils or those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Too many pupils are regularly absent from school, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Still too many pupils are excluded from school, particularly disadvantaged pupils.
- Until very recently, too many students did not continue their studies in the sixth form and left the school. These students received poor advice and guidance, particularly prior to moving into the sixth form.

The school has the following strengths

- The majority of pupils who attend school behave well. Pupils' behaviour around school and in lessons indicates that many are courteous young people, and are keen to learn.
- Leaders have ensured a positive and creative environment in which pupils can learn.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership by:
 - ensuring that those responsible for governance provide effective oversight and make certain that improvement happens at the appropriate pace and that this improvement is sustained
 - ensuring that the support to the school from the trust is of good enough quality and is of sufficient quantity to make the positive difference needed
 - ensuring that the school's use of the pupil premium and Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up funding, is efficiently monitored and addresses the needs of eligible pupils
 - improving the quality of subject leadership, particularly the leadership of science
 - improving the leadership of the provision for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Improve the quality of personal development behaviour and welfare by:
 - reducing further the proportion of pupils that regularly fail to attend school, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - reduce further the proportion of pupils that are excluded from school, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Improve outcomes for pupils by ensuring that:
 - pupils' underperformance in science is immediately addressed by improving the quality of subject leadership and teaching
 - pupils' underperformance in geography and in history is immediately addressed by improving the quality of teaching and providing high-quality support to the very new leaders of these subject areas
 - the most able pupils achieve at the same levels as the most able pupils do nationally
 - more disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as the other pupils with the same starting points
 - more pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve at the levels of which they are capable.
- Improve the quality of teaching by making sure that:
 - teachers use the information about pupils' starting points to plan lessons that provide sufficient support and challenge for different groups of pupils

- there is a rapid reduction in the variability and quality of teaching, within subjects and across subject areas
- teachers use a range of strategies, including effective questioning, to probe and extend pupils' thinking, particularly the most able pupils.
- Improve the quality of the 16 to 19 study programmes by making sure that:
 - effective careers information and guidance are in place so that students move successfully to the next steps in their learning, employment or training
 - the curriculum more suitably meets the needs of the students within this school community
 - students achieve at the levels of which they are capable

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Those responsible for governance have badly let down this school. They have not held leaders to account to ensure that the standard of pupils' achievement rapidly improves. They have failed to check that school-improvement support is appropriate or is having the required impact. They have not safeguarded the school's finances or ensured that pupil premium funding or the Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up funding makes a difference for the pupils who are eligible.
- The principal has not received the support or the high-quality challenge that she has needed or deserved. The support to this school from The Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust has been ineffective. It is not of the type or of the quality the school requires. This has hindered the school's improvement.
- The principal has worked hard, and with determination. However, her efforts have not resulted in the significant improvement that is needed.
- Leaders' views of the school are overly generous and inaccurate. They have not acted swiftly enough to address areas that needed to improve and pupils have continued to underachieve as a result.
- Leaders have not made sure that teachers plan well enough for the differing needs of pupils, particularly the needs of the most able pupils, disadvantaged pupils or pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Consequently, these pupils continue to underperform.
- Subject leadership is too variable in quality. The subject leadership of science is weak. Some subject leaders are very new to the role. There are too many subject areas where the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement is inadequate because of poor-quality subject leadership.
- Leaders have failed to ensure that pupil premium funding has made enough of a positive impact on the pupils it supports. For example, disadvantaged pupils underachieve across a range of subjects, including in English and mathematics. Too many disadvantaged pupils are regularly absent and miss their lessons and too many are excluded from the school.
- Leaders have not made sure that the proportion of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities attend school. Too many of these pupils do not attend school regularly enough.
- Leaders are continuing to develop and review the curriculum in order to best meet the needs of pupils. Currently, aspects of the key stage 3 and key stage 4 curriculum do not best meet the needs of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, the most able pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The leadership of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is inadequate. These pupils do not receive the support they require to make the progress that they should. Too many of these pupils regularly do not attend school.
- Leaders have implemented a behaviour management system. Most pupils who attend school behave well at social times and in their lessons. Pupils told inspectors that the

behaviour management system had made a significant difference to them and had improved the climate in which they learned. However, still too many pupils are excluded from school.

- Leaders have implemented an increasingly effective system to monitor the performance of teachers. Teachers now have clear targets to achieve and regular opportunities to discuss their professional development. These are recent developments and so it is too early to judge their impact on improving the quality of teaching.
- Leaders are now ensuring that all staff have regular opportunities to train and develop their practice. Teachers are now becoming keen to learn together and share their ideas and skills. These are very recent developments.
- Leaders have provided pupils with a stimulating environment in which to learn. Space is used creatively to engage and enthuse pupils. Pupils show respect for their school and said that they appreciate the efforts made by staff.
- Leaders have provided a wide range of extra-curricular activities to help to broaden pupils' experiences. Time and attention is given to introduce pupils to a range of sporting and cultural experiences. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the many opportunities to take part in sport after school. They were keen also to speak about the future production of 'Bugsy' and their involvement in this. The curriculum effectively supports pupils' learning about different faiths, languages and cultures.

Governance of the school

- Leaders have an overly generous view of the school. Those responsible for governance have not been effective in holding leaders to account. They have not provided leaders with sufficiently well-informed challenge regarding the legacy of pupils' inadequate achievement. They have not ensured that the view of the school is accurate or that correct actions are taken to address the significant underperformance that exists.
- Those responsible for governance have not championed the needs of leaders, teachers or pupils. They have not made sure that the support to the school is having the required impact or is cost effective. For example, some of the school improvement support has given leaders an overly generous view of the school. There is still no effective support in place to rapidly improve the leadership of science.
- Those responsible for governance have not been effective in holding leaders to account for the impact of the use of the pupil premium funding. They have failed to make sure that this external funding to the school has helped disadvantaged pupils to make sufficient progress, or to attend school regularly.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils told inspectors that they felt safe within their school. They said that bullying is rare, and tackled quickly if it does happen. Pupils and parents are overwhelming in their praise of the new behaviour system and the way in which the improvement in pupils' behaviour has improved pupils' welfare.
- The leaders who have responsibility for safeguarding work tirelessly on behalf of pupils. Issues are sensitively managed, in a timely fashion. Leaders work with a range of external agencies to make sure that pupils receive the help that they require. Many

parents commented positively on the difference that this work made to their child and how grateful they were.

- All staff are aware of their role in ensuring pupils' safety and welfare. A comprehensive training programme is in place for all staff, and leaders have ensured that an appropriate safeguarding policy is in place.
- Pupils have many opportunities to learn how to keep safe. This includes how to keep safe when using the computer, including on social media. Leaders have ensured that pupils learn about the risks to their safety associated with radicalisation and sexual exploitation. Pupils have regular opportunities in their tutor time to discuss issues that may be of concern to them. Pupils told inspectors that there were many people they could go to if they had a problem or a concern, and that they appreciated this.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate. There is too much variability in the quality of teaching across subject areas. Teaching is weakest in science, geography and history. There is much better teaching in English and in mathematics, but even in these subjects, weaker teaching is evident. This means that pupils continue to underperform in a range of subjects.
- Too often, teachers' planning does not address the learning needs of pupils with differing starting points. For example, the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, too rarely have the opportunities to develop their skills or extend and deepen their understanding. Lower-ability pupils often do not receive the appropriate work and support in their lessons to enable them to learn the skills they need in order to catch up with their peers.
- Teachers' use of questioning within lessons is frequently weak. Opportunities are missed to probe pupils' understanding and challenge their thinking. At times, the urgency to move on to the next task means that pupils lose the opportunity to ask their own questions of their teacher. This inhibits pupils' progress. Teachers fail to challenge pupils or address their misconceptions.
- A marking and feedback policy is in place. This policy includes the opportunity for pupils to reflect on what they have learned and what their next steps may be. Leaders have not made sure that teachers apply this policy consistently. This means that some pupils do not receive the guidance they require or have the help they need to correct mistakes. Leaders have implemented an effective strategy to help pupils to develop their reading skills. Pupils receive expert guidance to learn to read and to develop a love of reading.
- When teachers rigorously apply the marking and assessment policy, pupils receive good advice. Subsequently they then make good progress. Inspectors saw evidence of some teachers applying the marking and assessment policy rigorously, for example in English and in modern foreign languages.
- Inspectors observed pupils enjoying learning and making good progress within modern foreign language and art lessons.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development is inadequate.
- Too often, and in too many lessons, pupils fail to succeed. Too many underachieve and do not have their talents fully developed or their learning needs addressed. In some cases, pupils' next steps in learning, employment or training are limited as a result.
- Too many vulnerable pupils are regularly absent from school. A third of pupils that are known to be eligible for free school meals regularly miss school. They, as other pupils, cannot afford to miss their learning or the extensive opportunities the school offers to safeguard their welfare.
- Pupils with whom inspectors spoke said that they valued their school and that they felt safe. They said that they appreciated the many ways in which they could seek support and guidance from their teachers.
- The 'thought of the week' programme regularly introduces pupils to topical issues and provides pupils with opportunities for discussions with experts and with their peers.
- Leaders and teachers work skilfully with parents and a range of agencies to make sure that pupils receive the support that they need.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- An unacceptable proportion of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are regularly absent from school. Although the attendance of other pupils has improved, the most vulnerable pupils are too regularly absent.
- Leaders have implemented an effective and positive behaviour policy. This policy is benefiting those pupils who attend school. Leaders, teachers, parents and pupils respect the policy. All said that the climate for learning within the school had improved as a result. However, the number of pupils excluded from school remains too high.
- Those pupils receiving their education off-site, at alternative provision, behave appropriately and make progress. Communication between these providers and the school is good.
- Many more pupils now conduct themselves well around school and in lessons. They show respect for each other, for example when queueing at lunchtime or when holding doors open for each other or for their teachers. Pupils said that they were proud of their school.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Outcomes for pupils are inadequate. Historically, at key stage 4, the school did not meet the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics. The most recent information about pupils' results in 2016 indicates that, once again, the government's minimum expectations have not been met.

- At key stage 4, pupils underperform in too many subjects. These include science, history and geography. Still too many pupils fail to succeed as well as they should in English.
- Too many disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, fail to achieve as well as they should. In far too many curriculum areas, disadvantaged pupils make less progress than others within the school. In some cases, disadvantaged pupils achieve significantly less well than other pupils with the same starting points. The use of the pupil premium funding has not made enough of an impact on these pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not make the progress that they should. Many are not having their learning needs met.
- Teachers' expectations of what the most able pupils can achieve, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are too low. Too few of these pupils achieve at the levels of which they are capable. At the end of key stage 4, too many of these pupils do not gain the range of qualifications they need to move successfully to the next steps in their learning.
- Recently, leaders have improved the data and assessment systems in the school. Subject leaders now have available to them a range of ways to assess pupils' progress at key stage 3 and at key stage 4. It is too early to assess the impact of this process on improving pupils' achievement.
- Subject leaders and teachers have received guidance and support to help them to assess pupils' work accurately. Leaders now have more confidence in the quality of teachers' assessments.
- In 2016, the school's published results show that pupils' attainment in mathematics has improved. More pupils made progress appropriate to their starting points than previously.

16 to 19 study programmes

Inadequate

- The leader of the sixth form is new to the role. This senior leader has a vision and has shown commitment to improve this provision. It is too soon to judge the impact of this new leader's work.
- Retention rates are inadequate. Until very recently, too many students did not receive appropriate advice and consequently did not have their learning needs met. Too many students did not continue their studies in the sixth form and left the school. Too many students did not continue their studies into Year 13.
- Although students' achievement improved in 2016, too many students did not achieve at national levels or as well as their starting points would indicate that they should.
- Disadvantaged students do not attend the sixth form as regularly as other students in this provision do. They miss too many days of learning.
- The sixth-form curriculum does not best meet the needs of students at this school. The many subjects on offer attract too few students. Leaders are aware of these issues and are planning to address them.
- The small number of students who resit their GCSE examination, in either English or in mathematics, are successful in gaining the qualification at a C grade or above.

- Students benefit from work experience and said that they valued the opportunity to learn outside school.
- Currently, teachers have good subject knowledge and use this well when planning for students' learning. In lessons, students have productive relationships with their teachers.
- In 2016, more students achieved the highest grades at A level than did in the previous year.

School details

Unique reference number	136948
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10019564

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,317
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	103
Appropriate authority	The Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust
Chair	Wayne Norrie
Principal	Rachel Steele
Telephone number	01604 402121
Website	www.westonfavellacademy.org
Email address	admin@westonfavellacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	5–6 November 2014

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about pupil premium funding on its website.
- The school does not comply with DfE guidance on what academies should publish about the impact of pupil premium spending. Many policies, produced by the trust, are out of date or do not contain precise information that is relevant to this school.
- The school is part of The Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust.
- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school.

- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding is much higher than the average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is much lower than average, as is the proportion of pupils with a statement of special needs or with an education, health and care plan.
- The school works with two alternative providers, who provide pupils at the school with education at placements off the school site. These providers are Northampton College and Complementary Education – Overleys campus.
- Historically the school has not meet the government’s current floor standards for pupils’ achievement at key stage 4. In 2015, the school did not meet the government’s current floor standards for pupils’ achievement at key stage 4.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 44 lessons, the majority of which were observed jointly with senior school leaders.
- An inspector listened to pupils read, including some of the most able pupils.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books from across all year groups within lessons. A sample of the work of the most able disadvantaged pupils in Year 7 and in Year 11 was also scrutinised.
- The lead inspector held a range of meetings, including with the principal and with senior leaders. A meeting was held with the chief executive of the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust.
- Inspectors held meetings with staff responsible for leading on behaviour and achievement, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders and the senior leader with oversight of the sixth-form provision. They also spoke with the designated safeguarding lead, pastoral leaders and members of staff with responsibility for careers advice and guidance, and for aspects of the curriculum and the Year 7 base.
- An inspector spoke with a representative of each of the alternative providers at which pupils from the school attend.
- Inspectors observed pupils arriving at the school. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, between lessons and during breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation relating to the school, including: the school's development planning and self-evaluation; minutes of the Academy Advisory Council meetings; performance data for all year groups; and records on behaviour, attendance, exclusions and pupils' safety and welfare.
- Inspectors considered 132 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View and 64 responses from members of the school staff to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Staff Survey.

Inspection team

Jayne Ashman, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
John Edwards	Ofsted Inspector
Christopher Davies	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Robinson	Ofsted Inspector
Laurence Reilly	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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