

Inspection of The West Bridgford School

Loughborough Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG2 7FA

Inspection dates: 30 and 31 January 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Sixth-form provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

The headteacher of this school is Tim Peacock. This school is part of East Midlands Education Trust (EMET), which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Robert McDonough, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Andrew Hindmarsh.

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since November 2011.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils receive a highly ambitious education at this school. Pupils and parents/carers appreciate the school's high expectations and exacting standards. They know that these keep pupils safe and support pupils to achieve across the curriculum to the very best of their abilities. As a result, the outcomes for pupils, including students in the sixth form, are some of the highest in the country. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) also achieve exceptionally well.

Everybody understands the importance of excellent behaviour throughout the school. Pupils show good conduct, both inside and outside of lessons. The vast majority of pupils understand and follow the school routines well. They know there is an adult they can talk to if needed.

Pupils can take on an extensive range of responsibilities and opportunities to develop their leadership skills, including in the sixth form. Students take great pride in supporting their younger peers and organising the popular annual 'Bridgstock' music festival.

Parents appreciate the high aspirations that the school has for all pupils. A comment, typical of many, was: 'The school has a caring ethos and sets high standards for the children, which it supports them to achieve.'

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

The school has designed and implemented a broad and ambitious curriculum that has the English Baccalaureate at its heart. Teachers present key concepts very effectively. They systematically revisit content taught previously. This ensures that pupils can confidently remember what they have learned. The work given allows pupils, over time and across the school, to achieve the aims of the curriculum consistently. This successful strategy is underpinned by a strong professional development offer for staff that focuses on using research-based approaches to teaching and learning.

Support for pupils with SEND is very strong. These pupils successfully access the same curriculum as their peers. The needs of pupils with SEND are identified precisely and shared effectively with staff. The school uses appropriate external services and expert staff in school to ensure that disadvantaged pupils are well cared for and excel.

Teaching in the sixth form is exceptional. Students develop high-quality skills and in-depth knowledge. They encounter work that is appropriately challenging and produce outcomes of a consistently high standard. Students show a determined commitment to their studies.

Pupils are usually fluent readers on arrival. Nevertheless, literacy, oracy and reading are prioritised. Where additional support is needed to develop literacy, well-trained staff provide effective interventions. Enrichment activities, such as debating club, develop pupils' confidence in expressing their knowledge and views. As a result, pupils become highly articulate and eloquent.

Pupils are keen to succeed, and they behave well. Expectations of pupils' behaviour are consistently high. There are some rare instances when a few pupils struggle to meet these expectations. The school is working hard to ensure that every avenue of support is available for these pupils. For example, the school has invested in employing and training counsellors. Incidents of bullying happen rarely, and the school acts swiftly to resolve these effectively. The school's use of alternative provision is having a significant and positive impact for pupils who attend these settings.

Overall rates of attendance are high. This enables pupils to take full advantage of the high quality of education and wider rich experiences provided by the school.

The wider personal development of pupils is a strength of the school. The school provides an extremely rich range of opportunities to nurture pupils' talents and interests, and pupils make the most of these. The school places a high importance on pupils developing their leadership skills. Sixth-form students, for example, have many opportunities to take on leadership roles, including being well trained to mentor younger pupils. There is a strong focus on promoting equality and diversity. This gives pupils an informed appreciation of, and respect for, difference. These extensive opportunities ensure that pupils understand the positive impact they can have in school and beyond.

Pupils benefit from comprehensive careers information, education, advice and guidance. Those attending alternative provisions are particularly well supported in planning their next steps. Students in the sixth form receive expert guidance from highly committed staff when they apply for university places or higher apprenticeships.

The trust plays a key role in helping the school achieve its ambition for pupils. Governors and trustees have a thorough understanding of the school. They work exceptionally well together to provide direction, challenge and support. There is a shared commitment and an unswerving determination to make continuous improvement to the school. Staff are rightly proud and happy to work at this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	136628
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10298466
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,785
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	436
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andrew Hindmarsh
CEO of the trust	Robert McDonough
Headteacher	Tim Peacock
Website	www.wbs.school
Dates of previous inspection	23 and 24 November 2011

Information about this school

- The school became an academy in April 2011 and the founding member of the multi-academy trust, EMET, in 2014.
- The school currently uses two registered and five unregistered alternative provisions.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, modern foreign languages, and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects and visited a range of lessons.
- Inspectors held meetings with a range of leaders, including the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the board of trustees, the CEO of the trust, and members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors met with pupils to discuss their experience of school life.
- An inspector met with early career teachers and with the staff involved in their induction.
- An inspector spoke with representatives from the alternative provisions used by the school.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation provide by the school, including documents on the school's website.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of records relating to behaviour and attendance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the responses, including the free-text responses, received during the inspection to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

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