

Inspection of The Wellington Academy

Tidworth Road, Ludgershall, Wiltshire SP11 9RR

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 October 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have very high expectations of pupils and staff alike. They are passionate about improving the life chances of every pupil during their time in school. Pupils, especially those in the sixth form, delight in their strong working relationships with staff. Pupils appreciate the wider opportunities they have through extra-curricular activities.

Pupils enjoy a calm and orderly atmosphere in school. They show respect to each other and to staff. There is little low-level disruption and, when it occurs, staff deal with it using the systems in place. Most pupils learn from this. On the few occasions that bullying takes place, staff deal with it swiftly.

There is a strong military presence in the community. Leaders work effectively with the garrison commander and regimental commanding officers to make sure pupils understand and respect the traditions and history of the area. Leaders are keen to engage with other members of the community, too.

Many pupils arrive and leave the school at times other than the usual transition points. Leaders are responsive to the needs of such pupils and ensure that any movement between schools is managed effectively.

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

Leaders are developing the curriculum, using the expertise of teachers who are specialists in their fields. Older pupils, particularly those in the sixth form, remember important knowledge well and apply it to the topics explored. However, overall, there is still too much focus on the organisation and structure of the curriculum and not enough on identifying the key concepts that pupils need to learn over time. Leaders have worked hard to improve teaching and ensure consistency of practice. Nonetheless, the understanding of how to teach complex aspects of the curriculum is less secure. Leaders are training teachers on how to do this better.

Leaders have paid close attention to the needs of disadvantaged pupils. They have suitable plans in place to support pupils to attend well and learn successfully. Leaders track the successes of these pupils carefully and make sure any gaps in knowledge are closed. There has been some generic support in place for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The new special educational needs coordinator has taken steps to build on this, so that the specific needs of pupils are identified more precisely. However, it is too soon to see the full impact of this work.

Reading is prioritised. The English curriculum is rich in classic and diverse texts. This improves pupils' cultural perceptions. Teachers read novels with pupils regularly to enrich their vocabulary and understanding of historical and topical themes. However, there are some pupils who enter school who are not able to read accurately and

fluently. Consequently, these pupils are not able to keep up with others in their learning because they are unable to comprehend the texts used fully.

Pupils learn in an age-related way about positive relationships and health and sex education. However, other aspects of the personal, social and economic curriculum are not developed fully. Consequently, pupils have not developed enough knowledge about some important topics to be able to debate and discuss them in depth. Older pupils receive clear guidance about future pathways in education, employment and training. However, in Years 8 and 9 pupils do not receive a comprehensive enough careers education. Therefore, the school does not fully meet the requirements of the Baker Clause.

Leaders are mindful of staff workload and use formal assessment processes proportionately. Where assessment is used effectively, it is highly proficient at checking pupils' learning and ensuring that misconceptions are spotted and remedied. However, in some cases teachers' expectations are too low. This means that sometimes pupils do not do their best, and misunderstandings persist.

The trust has supported leaders in the school with the key priorities. The chief executive officer, trustees and governors are astute in their evaluation of the school. They challenge school leaders in a balanced way. Staff value the strong leadership of the headteacher and the positive changes that he is making. This has helped the school to maintain its momentum to continually improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The designated safeguarding lead is vigilant in his duties and is a strong advocate for pupils at risk of harm. Leaders make sure that external support is provided at the right level to keep pupils safe.

Staff receive regular and up-to-date training. They know how to identify and report any concerns about pupils who may be vulnerable.

Recruitment checks are undertaken thoroughly.

The school has suitable policies in place to raise awareness among staff and parents about the dangers of sexual harassment, online sexual abuse and sexual violence.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, there has not been sufficient consideration of the key concepts that pupils need to learn over time. As a result, many pupils are not able to retain important knowledge that would allow them to integrate new knowledge into

larger ideas. Leaders must ensure that subject curriculums are reviewed with this in mind.

- Some aspects of the personal, social and economic curriculum are not planned well enough. As a result, pupils do not have the depth of knowledge needed to discuss important topics meaningfully. Leaders must ensure that curriculum planning and staff training support this to happen more effectively.

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](#)' 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.

School details

Unique reference number	135804
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10199687
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,083
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	143
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nathan Coombs
Headteacher	Steven Paddock
Website	www.thewellingtonacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 March 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher was appointed in April 2020.
- The school became part of the Ascend Learning Trust in 2020.
- The school uses four registered and two unregistered alternative providers.
- The school does not fully meet the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information 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.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, the chief executive officer, the deputy chief executive officer, the chair of trustees, the chair of governors, the special educational needs coordinator and the head of sixth form. The lead inspector had a telephone call with the headteacher of an alternative provider.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector checked the recruitment processes and spoke with the safeguarding leaders. Inspectors spoke with teachers, staff and pupils to gauge their understanding of safeguarding and keeping safe.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's survey, Ofsted Parent View, and staff and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

Kathy Maddocks, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Fran Gormley	Ofsted Inspector
Mike Foley	Ofsted Inspector
Julia Chapman	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah McGinnis	His Majesty's Inspector

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