

Inspection of a good school: North Leamington School

Sandy Lane, Blackdown, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV32 6RD

Inspection dates: 24–25 September 2019

Outcome

North Leamington School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this school. Interactions between staff and pupils are friendly, courteous and polite. Behaviour is good in lessons and at break and lunchtimes. Pupils are kind to one another and support each other with their work. Lessons are generally free from disruptions. Older pupils act as positive role models to their younger peers.

Pupils told us that bullying is not tolerated at school. Staff quickly deal with any that occurs. Pupils say that they enjoy school and are safe here. Parents and teachers say the same. Leaders ensure that vulnerable pupils get support in the school's nurture area. Here, they can take time out and get support from Lulu the school dog. Pupils told us how Lulu has helped them with their mental health.

Pupils speak with pride and enthusiasm about their learning. They enjoy the many opportunities for learning beyond the classroom. They gave various examples of clubs and visits that they have taken part in such as the Breen Sands trip.

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

Leaders have a clear vision and rationale for the curriculum at the school. It is ambitious for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. Pupils are supported to achieve aspirational targets and frequently do so. Leaders and subject leaders have planned what pupils should learn term by term in each subject. These plans make clear to teachers exactly what to teach pupils and in what order. Teachers know what pupils should learn before they move on. In most subjects this works well, such as in geography, English and science. For example, pupils in geography spoke about their field trip and how that learning links to their current topic. Teachers adapt these plans so that pupils with SEND can access the learning.

Plans in food technology are not as well organised. Here, plans do not follow in a logical order, but they do set out what pupils should learn. Pupils do not gain enough basic knowledge to help them understand later topics. For example, Year 11 pupils were not

able to explain why rising agents are important in some foods. They struggle with this because they have not remembered what rising agents are used for.

Students in the sixth form enjoy their studies. Subject plans build on prior knowledge and deepen it further. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and share their enthusiasm with students. Students achieve well. They enjoy many trips to universities, colleges and visits from apprenticeship providers. They contribute well to school and the wider community, for instance, through volunteering. Students are well prepared for their next stages in life. Almost all of them move on to positive destinations.

This year, pupils in Year 10 will sit their English Literature GCSE examination early. Leaders have adapted the English plans so that pupils continue to read full texts in a shorter space of time. They have plans in place to check if pupils will learn all they need to be successful.

Leaders support pupils' personal development well. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is well planned and delivered in religious education (RE) lessons and in tutor time. Leaders need to check that the delivery of the RE subject content is not negatively affected by the quantity of PSHE work during these lessons. Pupils told us that they discuss issues in more depth during focus days. They said that they would like more input on life skills, such as finances and how to stay debt-free. Leaders have acted on this. The plans for this academic year include personal finance lessons.

Leaders consider staff workload and well-being. For example, they have restructured assessments. Teachers told us that they have had a say in when and how often they check pupils' learning. Staff feel well supported by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive the training they need to spot any signs that a child may need help. All staff know who to refer any issues on to. They know about potential risks that exist within their local and regional community. Leaders refer any concerns on and the safeguarding team deal with them quickly.

Leaders work well with outside agencies. Staff refer concerns on and seek help and advice to ensure that pupils are safe. Safeguarding staff give extra help to families when they need it. Leaders complete the required employment checks and keep accurate records.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all subject plans within the curriculum are sequenced to follow a logical order. As a result, not all plans are effective in ensuring that pupils learn what they need to over time. Leaders should make sure that plans in each subject set out what order learning is sequenced to ensure that pupils can achieve.
- A great proportion of the plans for pupils' personal development is currently delivered in RE lessons. Leaders need to assure themselves that pupils have enough time in RE lessons to learn about different faiths and beliefs as well as the other topics that have been included in these lessons.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, North Leamington School, to be good in February 2014.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	142202
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10111707
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy
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	1,466
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	242
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Richard Freeth
Headteacher	Joy Mitchell
Website	http://www.northleamingtonschool.warwickshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy

Information about this school

- North Leamington School converted to become an academy on 1 November 2016. When its predecessor school, North Leamington School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school uses one alternative provider, Leamington LAMP, for part-time alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteachers and assistant headteachers, subject and middle leaders, teachers, pupils, and governors, including a telephone conversation with the chair of the governing body. They scrutinised school documents, including curriculum plans and school development plans.

- Inspectors scrutinised the school’s safeguarding arrangements and documentation, including the single central record. They met with the designated safeguarding lead and special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors spoke with teaching, kitchen, caretaking and cleaning staff about safeguarding.
- Inspectors visited the school’s nurture area and visited the school’s internal isolation room.
- Inspectors completed various inspection activities to gather evidence on the quality of education. These included lesson visits, looking at pupils’ work and discussions with subject leaders and teachers and with pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour during lessons and at break and lunchtimes. Inspectors spoke to many pupils during the two days of the inspection.
- The inspection focused on English, geography, science and food technology. All other subjects were considered as part of the inspection.

Inspection team

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