

Stamford Welland Academy

Green Lane, Stamford, Lincolnshire PE9 1HE

Inspection dates

24–25 January 2017

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	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The principal provides highly effective leadership. He has created a culture of ambition and aspiration at the school and there is a relentless focus on school improvement.
- The trust, senior leaders and members of the academy council (governors), are determined to secure the best possible outcomes for every pupil. They know the school well and are clear about the school's strengths and what needs to improve.
- Leadership of subjects is good. Leaders are committed to ensuring that pupils make good progress and exceed expectations.
- The leadership of the school's work with pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and with disadvantaged pupils is very strong. They make good progress and achieve well.
- Strong leadership of teaching and learning and a comprehensive programme of training and development have ensured that teaching is now good.
- In 2016, the progress made by pupils in Year 11 from their starting points was above average. Pupils make good progress in a range of subjects in all year groups.
- Leaders and teachers track pupils' progress rigorously. They respond quickly and effectively when they identify any underperformance.
- Procedures to safeguard pupils are robust. The school's work to support pupils, especially vulnerable pupils, is outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils are polite, courteous and respectful.
- Attendance has improved because of the determined work of staff and the tailored support offered to pupils.
- There are strong relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils know that there is always someone to talk to if they have a worry or concern.
- Governors are highly skilled and experienced. They are effective in holding senior leaders to account. The trust and academy council have a relentless focus on school improvement.
- Some teachers do not consistently apply the school's policy on feedback to pupils. This means that some pupils are not clear about what they have to do to improve their work. This also has a negative impact on the quality of presentation in some books.
- The way in which some teachers question pupils about their learning does not consistently deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- The positive values the school successfully encourages pupils to have are not closely linked to British values.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the quality of teaching by ensuring that all teachers:
 - consistently use the school’s marking and feedback policy so that pupils always know how to improve their work
 - have consistently high expectations of the standard of work in pupils’ books
 - question pupils deeply about their learning to check their knowledge and understanding.
- Place greater emphasis on preparing pupils for life in modern Britain, by:
 - improving the current religious education (RE) programme and the school’s provision for pupils’ spiritual development
 - making explicit to pupils the links between British values and the school’s own values.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The highly effective leadership of the principal has led to rapid improvement at the school since the last inspection. He has built a strong and effective team of senior leaders who are determined and tenacious in their drive for school improvement. Each pupil is known as an individual and the work of the trust, school leaders and the governors reflects the school's ambition and aspiration that every pupil will be successful.
- Leaders know the school well. They are clear about its strengths and what they need to improve. They are relentless in their drive to secure sustained improvement. The trust has provided invaluable, high-quality leadership support to strengthen the leadership team at the school.
- Subject leaders have strong knowledge of their subject and use assessment information to make sure that they have detailed knowledge of each pupil's progress and how different groups of pupils are performing. They intervene quickly when they find any signs of underperformance.
- The leadership of the school's work with pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is impressive. Their progress is tracked rigorously. A wide range of support and intervention programmes ensure that pupils do well and, as a result, these pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress.
- The leadership of the school's work with disadvantaged pupils is effective. Support provided for these pupils is tailored to their individual needs. The differences between the attainment and progress of these pupils and others nationally have diminished rapidly.
- High-quality leadership of teaching and learning at the school, with strong and systematic support and challenge, continues to improve its quality. Ongoing training and development is effective and is much appreciated by staff. Best practice is widely shared across the staff team. Teachers new to the profession are supported well.
- The school's strong values system underpins the school's vision and contributes to the open and supportive culture of the school. The values are communicated well to parents, pupils and the community and are modelled by all staff.
- Teachers and leaders make good use of performance information. It is presented in an easily understandable way and staff make good use of the information to plan to meet individual pupils' needs and enable them to make good progress.
- The school's effective use of assessment data has showed that, in some year groups, groups of pupils are not showing consistently good progress in all subjects. The school has put clear strategies in place to diminish any differences that currently exist.
- Parents' views are valued and staff make strenuous efforts to communicate regularly with them.
- The curriculum has been altered recently to ensure that a highly academic curriculum runs alongside a wide range of option choices in key stage 4. The curriculum in key stage 3 is innovative and designed to prepare pupils fully for the study skills they need

to succeed in key stage 4.

- The extra-curricular activities and clubs available to pupils at lunchtime and after school, along with 'Session 6' activities, are numerous and wide ranging. They make a very positive contribution to pupils' personal development.
- The RE curriculum and the school's work to ensure that pupils learn about British values do not prepare pupils well enough for life in modern Britain. Provision for pupils' social, moral and cultural development is good, but provision for their spiritual development is less strong.
- The careers education, information, advice and guidance programme for pupils does not provide enough opportunities for individual, impartial advice for pupils.

Governance of the school

- The governors (who form the academy council), are a very experienced, knowledgeable and committed group of people. The set of skills they have means they offer robust challenge and support to senior leaders at the school. The trust is represented on the academy council.
- The governors rigorously hold the principal and senior leaders to account for all aspects of the school's work. 'Champions' for key areas, such as pupil premium and safeguarding, hold regular meetings with school leaders who are held to account for their work. Reports on these meetings are presented at full academy council meetings and any actions are followed up. Accountability is a strong feature of governance running from the trust through to the academy council.
- Financial accountability is ensured through regular meetings with representatives of the trust who oversee finances.
- Governors ensure that no member of staff is rewarded for poor performance through their robust monitoring of the school's performance management processes. Recommendations for pay increases stem from a thorough interrogation of a range of evidence.
- Governors' work to monitor the impact of the pupil premium funding on attainment and progress, and their work to promote British values at the school, is limited.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils know that they are safe and well cared for. If they are worried about something they know that there are always staff that they can talk to.
- The support and care provided for vulnerable pupils is outstanding.
- Senior leaders and governors are very effective in ensuring that statutory requirements are met.
- There are rigorous training programmes in place for all staff and governors and there are robust trust protocols for testing out the effectiveness of safeguarding. Systems of tracking any safeguarding concerns are robust.

- Pupils are taught well how to keep themselves safe, including when online and in relation to extremism and radicalisation.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils benefit from good teaching, which means that they achieve well. Teachers carefully plan work that provides a good level of challenge for pupils across the ability range.
- Time is used well in lessons and teachers move pupils' learning on quickly to enable them to make good progress.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and this enables them to provide interesting learning experiences for pupils. Pupils demonstrate enjoyment in their learning and mostly show positive attitudes to learning. In a very few lessons, some pupils are not always completely on task and chat to each other.
- The support of other adults in the classroom is effective in ensuring that pupils make good progress, especially those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Adults know pupils well and are effective in helping them make the most of their learning opportunities.
- Homework is set regularly and completed well by pupils. The setting of homework or the follow up of a homework task is a key feature of most lessons and completed homework is evident in pupils' books. It contributes well to pupils' good progress.
- The way that lessons are planned and delivered is guided by 'The Stamford Welland Way'. It is underpinned by the school's values, which ensure a level of consistency across the school.
- There are strong relationships between pupils and staff members and between pupils. When pupils are asked to work together on tasks or activities, they respond positively and this helps them to make good progress.
- The development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is taken account of in lessons in many subjects, with key words provided for pupils in most lessons.
- The majority of parents agree that their child is taught well at the school. Reports on pupils' progress are thorough and explained well so that parents can understand the information they contain. There is regular, active contact with parents to support their child's progress.
- Sometimes, teachers do not ask questions of pupils that allow them to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. They are too quick to accept a short answer, rather than expecting pupils to explain their thinking.
- The school's marking and feedback systems are not used consistently by all teachers. Sometimes, work is not checked for a long period of time. Sometimes, the information that teachers are expected to give pupils to help them improve their work is missing or is not checked to see if advice given has been acted on.
- There are some inconsistencies in the expectations teachers have of the standards of pupils' work in books. In these cases, pupils take less care with their work and make less effort to do their best.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils feel very safe and secure because of the caring and supportive environment that has been created at the school and because of the high priority that the school places on safeguarding. It is a highly inclusive place to learn.
- Pupils are rightly proud of their school and their individual achievements. Their positive attitudes to learning ensure that they make good progress and grow in confidence. They discuss quite complex issues with maturity and respect, both for each other and the topic under discussion.
- Pupils are taught well how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They show great confidence in making informed choices about how to ensure that they take care of their own mental and physical well-being.
- The support provided for vulnerable pupils is outstanding. Staff work tirelessly to ensure that the best possible help is given to these pupils so that they can do well at school.
- The school's support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is highly effective. Creative, personalised programmes are put in place and contribute to the very positive outcomes for these pupils.
- Good liaison with outside agencies and tailored support in school also ensure that children who are looked after attend well and make good progress.
- The school is a very welcoming environment. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that if it does happen, it is always dealt with swiftly. Pupils say that there are always adults that they can talk to if they have a worry or concern.
- There are many opportunities for pupils to take part in leadership roles, for example through the school council. Pupils regularly get involved in raising money for charities and doing work in the community. These opportunities contribute well to pupils' personal development.
- The personal development and welfare of the very few students who receive their education elsewhere are well supported.
- The vast majority of parents agree that their child is happy and safe at school.
- The careers programme and the well-thought-out curriculum running alongside the school's values system are ensuring that pupils fully understand the expectations that will be placed on them in their next stage of education, training or employment. Their attitudes equip them very well for life beyond school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.

- Pupils enjoy coming to school and are punctual to school and lessons. They come to lessons prepared to learn and show an eagerness to do well.
- Behaviour in lessons, as pupils move around the school and at break and lunchtimes is typically good. Pupils get on well together, are respectful of each other and adults, and are polite and courteous.
- Pupils attend well. Attendance has improved over recent years and is now in line with national averages. The number of pupils who are regularly absent from school is reducing. Boys' attendance is higher than that of girls. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils has improved rapidly over recent years.
- The good relationships that exist between staff and pupils at the school contribute to the welcoming and harmonious environment and to pupils' good behaviour. Inspectors did not hear any derogatory or inappropriate language during the inspection.
- Pupils respect the school environment and there is no litter around the school buildings or site.
- Pupils look smart in their school uniforms.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils start in Year 7 with levels of attainment that are significantly below average. From these low starting points, the proportions of pupils gaining good grades in their GCSE examinations across a range of subjects have increased since the last inspection. Pupils are making faster progress than the national average in most subjects.
- The good progress demonstrated in 2016 is set to continue this year and is evident across all year groups, most notably in Year 7. Where performance information shows that there may be some underachievement, leaders and teachers are quick to identify this and intervene to ensure that pupils do not fall behind.
- The differences between the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils and others nationally have diminished rapidly and, in some cases, been reversed. This is the case across a range of subjects and reflects the focus of the school's work to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good and sometimes outstanding progress in a range of subjects from their starting points. This is because of the very good support that they receive.
- The school considers that the top 20% of each year group are the most able pupils, regardless of their prior attainment. They are called 'champions' and are provided with a special programme of lessons and opportunities to ensure that they are challenged to achieve at the highest levels. Pupils, including most-able disadvantaged pupils, benefit from these opportunities and are making good progress.
- Targets set for pupils are challenging and moved up if pupils reach their targets early. Pupils are aware of their targets in each subject.
- The very few pupils who receive their education elsewhere are making reasonable progress.
- Pupils read widely and often and show a good understanding of texts. Pupils who are

having extra help with reading demonstrate good strategies for working out how to read words. Most-able pupils are able to have in-depth discussions about the books they are reading. The library is well used.

- The funding that the school receives to help pupils in Year 7 catch up on their peers if they are behind in English and mathematics has been well spent on a variety of strategies. There have been improvements in pupils' literacy and numeracy skills as a result.
- The proportion of pupils moving on to further education, employment and training after school is high.

School details

Unique reference number	137600
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10023087

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	356
Appropriate authority	The academy trust
Chair	Shirley Jamieson
Principal	Anthony Partington
Telephone number	01780 761000
Website	www.stamfordwellandacademy.org
Email address	enquiries@stamfordwellandacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	21–22 January 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website. The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is part of the Cambridge Meridian Academies Trust.
- The school is a much smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The majority of the pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is also above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- A very small number of pupils receive their education through the Pilgrim Service.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the

minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 11.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across subjects and year groups in 25 lessons and listened to pupils read. A number of the observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspection team looked closely at pupils' work in a sample of books across a range of subjects and in all year groups. They also looked at pupils' books in lessons.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, leaders in charge of subjects and specific aspects of the school's work, teachers, members of the academy council (governors) and representatives of the trust.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils from all year groups in meetings, informally around the school, and in lessons.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents. These included senior leaders' evaluations of the school's performance, improvement plans, policies, minutes of meetings of school staff and the academy council, and performance information on pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents through direct conversation and the 28 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. They took account of the 28 responses to the online questionnaire for staff and the 11 responses to the online questionnaire for pupils.

Inspection team

Denise Newsome, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Stevens	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Lyn-Cook	Ofsted Inspector

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