

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Wellsway School

Chandag Road, Keynsham, Bristol BS31 1PH

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 December 2024

Outcome

Wellsway School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Rob Pearsall. This school is part of the Futura Learning Partnership, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Gary Schlick, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Malcolm Broad.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school has high ambitions of its pupils. Pupils achieve well in published outcomes. It works closely with other local schools to offer a broad range of subjects to pupils and students. Sixth-form students apply to many different universities and apprenticeship programmes. They are well prepared to follow their chosen career pathways.

Enrichment opportunities run through the veins of the school. The school plans an exceptionally varied range of clubs and trips. Many pupils participate, often pursuing their interests outside of school or contributing to the local community. Pupils particularly appreciate the high-quality music and performance opportunities. For example, the sixth-form band plays for pupils during their Christmas fair.

Pupils are very positive about their school. The school has high expectations of pupils' conduct. In lessons, pupils focus on their learning. Pupils behave respectfully towards one another. When pupils report bullying behaviours, the school acts decisively. Incidents of derogatory behaviours are very few.

An exceptional number of pupils involve themselves in a large pupil leadership programme. As a result, pupils make an active contribution to shaping the school, for example the installation of additional sheltered areas for pupils to use during break times.

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

The school has designed a broad, ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum. It makes sure pupils' learning builds on what they know and can do. Teachers check what pupils can recall concisely. They use strategies, such as questioning, to identify exactly what pupils need to know next. Teachers use this information to plan the next stages of learning. As a result, pupils know what they need to do to improve and move forward.

On a few occasions, teaching strategies to adapt learning for pupils are not used well. When this happens, pupils do not progress with their learning as promptly as they could. The school has sharpened the processes for identifying the needs of pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Information about the specific needs of pupils and how to provide support is clearly communicated. As a result, teachers know their pupils well. Pupils, including those with SEND, achieve well.

The school checks how well pupils can read. It has identified the precise needs of pupils who are not confident in reading with fluency. Pupils who need to know their phonic sounds securely receive the teaching they need. However, the school has not put in place the learning for pupils who need to practise reading fluently and to build their comprehension skills. As a result, those pupils do not experience a consistent approach to developing their reading skills. The school works to build a love of reading among pupils. It plans a multitude of reading experiences, such as visiting authors or going to literary festivals. Pupils understand the ambitions of the school for them to read widely and for pleasure.

Pupils attend school well. The school monitors this closely. It identifies when some groups of pupils attend less well. When this happens, the school acts quickly to follow up. It has robust protocols in place to promote high attendance to school. In lessons, pupils engage and listen well. For the minority of pupils who do not respond to expectations, the school uses stepped approaches and suspension appropriately. Pupils appreciate the way in which the school celebrates their efforts and achievements.

The school has planned a comprehensive careers curriculum from Year 7 to Year 13. For example, pupils and students hear from employers and local providers about the wide pathways available to them. It prepares pupils well to make decisions about their next steps. Pupils in Year 11 have a robust induction to the sixth form. The school help pupils to be confident in their choice of courses. As a result, students stay on and are successful at completing their chosen qualifications. The personal, social health and education programme makes sure pupils and students learn about relationships and personal safety in an age-appropriate way. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online.

The school evaluates carefully the decisions it makes to continually improve the school for all pupils. The trust offers high-quality professional training and support. This enhances the expertise of staff and local governors for the roles they do. Staff are highly positive about how the school considers their workload and looks after their well-being. The school actively works with the local community, and pupils represent the school in many

ways, such as providing a youth voice with the local council. These relationships are highly regarded.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teaching strategies to adapt learning for pupils are not well embedded. This means, on occasions, pupils do not receive support or adaptation in an effective or timely way. The school needs to make sure its work on developing the pedagogical expertise of staff is well implemented.
- The school's approach to making sure pupils who need to develop their reading fluency beyond phonics is not consistent. It has identified with more precision the reading needs of pupils, but has not established the ways in which the pupils that need to can develop their fluency quickly over time. The school should ensure that those pupils build their fluency to become confident readers.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in June 2019.

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	137523
Local authority	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Inspection number	10344621
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
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	1,329
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	214
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Malcolm Broad
CEO of the trust	Gary Schlick
Headteacher	Rob Pearsall
Website	www.wellswayschool.com
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 June 2019

Information about this school

- The school shares a site with a studio school in the trust.
- Some pupils and students opt to study courses that are at more than one school in the trust.
- The school uses one registered and four 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

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to curriculum leaders, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors held discussions with school leaders, trust leaders, teachers and representatives from the local governing body.
- Inspectors met with several groups of pupils and students. They spoke to inspectors about their experiences of school.
- Inspectors viewed a range of school documentation, including the school development plan, minutes from governance meetings, and attendance and behaviour analysis and data.
- 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 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including parents' free-text comments. The inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's staff survey and responses to Ofsted's survey for pupils.

Inspection team

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