

Inspection of Joseph Leckie Academy

Walstead Road West, Walsall, West Midlands WS5 4PG

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 October 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Sixth-form provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school. Their attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils are safe. The school is calm and purposeful, and disruption to learning is rare. Few pupils underachieve and most flourish.

Pupils of all abilities are enthusiastic learners who enjoy their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) thrive. They receive strong support.

Pupils play and work happily together. There are few disagreements and staff resolve issues swiftly. Pupils work well with adults in school. Pupils value the opportunity to learn about social, moral, and cultural issues. They treat others with respect and will speak out if something is not right. They talk confidently with adults.

Pupils appreciate the extra opportunities this school offers. They take part in a wide range of activities. This includes animal care and poetry writing. More than 200 pupils are school council members. Pupils believe that their voice makes a difference.

Due to the pandemic, a few pupils and sixth-form students remained abroad. They had remote access to their lessons. Online learning included everyone.

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

Leaders have provided effective management during a challenging time in school. Trustees responded effectively to the difficult circumstances the school encountered. Staff reported that these arrangements worked well. Trustees appointed a new principal. His leadership motivates staff. They are proud to work in this school. Leaders have a clear plan of what needs to improve further. The school is moving forward at pace.

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils. They have mapped, in detail, a curriculum at key stage 3, that is broad and deep. Pupils study a wide range of subjects at key stage 4. Leaders have introduced an appropriate plan for more pupils to study a wider range of subjects that will support their next steps in education or employment and training.

Leaders have thought hard about the important knowledge that pupils need to learn. They have sequenced learning well so that pupils learn new content in the right order. This helps pupils to know and remember more. Teachers work well together to improve pupils' learning. Teachers frequently check pupils' understanding. This helps teachers to spot pupils' mistakes and to modify the

curriculum if needed. On occasion, tasks could be ordered better so that pupils' learning builds progressively over time.

Reading specialists help pupils who need support to read fluently. They help pupils improve their phonics knowledge so that they can read unfamiliar words. These pupils can read aloud with confidence. They read a range of texts, such as 'The Twits' by Roald Dahl, with joy.

Following the last inspection, leaders revised the use of pupil premium funding. They appointed staff to support disadvantaged pupils' specific needs. They provided high-quality training for teaching assistants and mentors. Leaders make regular checks on what is working effectively and adapt plans when needed. As a result, disadvantaged pupils continue to learn well.

Subject leaders have adapted the curriculum to ensure pupils with SEND flourish. Teachers work to overcome any barriers to learning for these pupils. Teachers deploy teaching assistants effectively so that pupils get good support. Teachers share information about the lesson with teaching assistants in advance. Together, they shape the lesson to meet pupils' needs. They spend time with each pupil so that they know what to do. Once settled, they assist other pupils. Pupils with SEND speak highly of this strong support. They say, 'support staff know us well.'

The well-planned personal development curriculum helps pupils to learn about a range of issues, such as people in society who have protected characteristics. Pupils have learned about issues such as sexual harassment in recent assemblies and why it is wrong. Pupils say they understand boundaries and consent better. They speak to one another with respect and know it is wrong to use derogatory language. School staff respond suitably when a pupil speaks inappropriately. Few pupils choose not to report any concern.

Leaders have created an inclusive programme of study for sixth-form students. They follow a well-planned academic and vocational curriculum. For example, they learn about the world of work. Students receive effective support to be successful and independent learners. Students with SEND appreciate the bespoke help their teachers provide. As a result, they do not fall behind. All students are well prepared to go on to higher education or employment and training.

Pupils receive impartial information about vocational and technical opportunities, available locally. Students can choose to study a specialism, such as law or engineering, with several local providers.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff work together well to promote a strong culture of safeguarding and to make sure pupils know how to stay safe. School leaders make appropriate checks on

adults' suitability to work with young people. They manage and maintain these records accurately. Staff check all visitors on entry and supervise them appropriately.

All staff receive high-quality safeguarding training. Staff keep their safeguarding and child protection knowledge up to date. They have regular safeguarding quizzes. Staff identify potential risks to pupils. They know how to refer these concerns. Staff share information with each other and designated safeguarding leads to make sure young people are safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders know that the quality of provision is not yet exceptional in every area. On occasion, the curriculum is not structured in a way that allows pupils to build on what they have learned before. Leaders should make sure that all subjects are consistently and coherently planned and sequenced so that all pupils have the essential knowledge needed to support their future learning.

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.

If you are the school and 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	137830
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	10201022
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	1392
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	230
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Lisa Ingram
Principal	James Ludlow
Website	http://www.josephleckieacademy.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	19 and 20 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The principal took up post in April 2021, following the unexpected death of the previous principal in March 2020. The trustees arranged for the academy's vice principal to be the interim principal.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision off site at two providers. Both providers, located in Walsall, meet the Department for Education statutory requirements for registration.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this 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 the school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspectors met with members of the senior leadership team and the chair of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, modern foreign languages, history and design technology. In these subjects, inspectors met with subject leaders, scrutinised their planning and made visits to lessons. They spoke with all subject teachers, not just those whose lessons they visited, and met with a selection of pupils.
- Inspectors visited personal development lessons in most year groups. They met with leaders responsible for personal development. Inspectors talked with pupils in key stages 3 and 4, as well as sixth-form students.
- Inspectors checked the single central record. They spoke with designated safeguarding leads about safeguarding and child protection procedures. They spoke with a broad range of pupils across all key stages and discussed safeguarding with the chair of trustees. Inspectors spoke with staff about their safeguarding training.
- The views of parents who completed Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted’s online survey, were considered. These included free-text responses made by parents. Inspectors took account of staff responses to the staff questionnaire and responses to the pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including records pertaining to self-evaluation and school improvement. They also considered records and documentation relating to attendance, bullying, behaviour, pupils with SEND, and disadvantaged pupils. They took account of a range of curriculum planning documents, including those related to the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships, and relationships, sex and health education.

Inspection team

Antony Edkins, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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David Buckle	Ofsted Inspector
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