

Inspection of West Coventry Academy

Tile Hill Lane, Coventry, West Midlands CV4 9PW

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 September 2023

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

The headteacher of this school is Ana Neofitou. This school is part of the Arthur Terry Learning Partnership (ATLP), which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Richard Gill, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by John Vickers.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school and are proud to show off their new school building. Despite the challenges of getting used to new routines, social times are calm and orderly. Pupils behave well in lessons. Pupils say they feel safe in school and are confident that the school will deal with any concerns.

The school has high expectations for all pupils. Leaders and staff take every opportunity to ensure pupils understand the school's '4R' values. Pupils are taught to be respectful, responsible, resilient and ready to learn. The school works closely with parents and carers to ensure that they understand the school's values and know how to help their children succeed.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain new ideas clearly. This helps pupils to understand the curriculum and make good progress in their learning.

Students in the sixth form are an asset to the school. They are excellent role models for younger pupils, clearly demonstrating the school's values. They volunteer to lead fundraising activities and act as tutors in their specialist subjects to younger pupils.

The school provides a wide range of opportunities to nurture and stretch pupils' talents and interests. Pupils appreciate these and make good use of them. Sporting activities are the most popular.

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

Since the last inspection, the new headteacher has rapidly built confidence among staff and pupils for her inclusive, ambitious vision. School leaders work closely with the trust to build a strong training programme for staff to help them improve outcomes for pupils.

Pupils study the full range of national curriculum subjects. At key stage 4, the school continues to explore ways to increase the number of pupils studying languages. In most subjects, the curriculum is now well designed to build pupils' knowledge and understanding. In some subjects, a weaker curriculum in previous years and difficulties with staffing have left pupils with gaps in their knowledge. It is not always clear how teachers intend to address these gaps in their planned curriculum. However, in the sixth form, teachers take the time at the start of courses to ensure that pupils have a secure understanding of the necessary knowledge from key stage 4. Expectations are high in lessons and pupils respond well when teachers set challenging tasks. Pupils are very attentive, and fully engaged in lessons.

In lessons, teachers choose examples and questions that help pupils to understand their work. There is a strong emphasis on making sure pupils understand key words. Teachers use a number of strategies to help pupils to remember key learning points. However, there are some pupils who do not recall their earlier work. This makes it more difficult for them to make sense of new learning.

The school has clear plans in place for the improvement of pupils' reading. Pupils read regularly in form time. Weaker readers are identified, and receive additional support from the librarian.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported in the classroom. Their progress is carefully monitored. Pupils have a say in how they can improve their learning. This helps them become increasingly independent in their learning.

Leaders know that pupils in key stage 4 do not yet make the progress expected in external examinations, because of the gaps in their learning from previous years. However, working closely with the trust, leaders are relentless in putting in place improvements to help pupils learn better. Outcomes are improving. Pupils in the sixth form have experienced less disruption to their learning and do well in their external examinations.

Pupils are taught explicitly what good behaviour looks like, so that they have a clear understanding of how they should behave. Pupils know how their actions impact on others. Parents are fully involved in the behaviour process and work with the school to improve outcomes.

The school carefully tracks pupils' attendance. A broad range of interventions are in place to help pupils improve their attendance. New staff have been appointed to work more closely with families. However, despite small improvements this term, the attendance of pupils in key stages 3 and 4, particularly disadvantaged pupils, remains low. Pupils in the sixth form attend regularly.

Pupils appreciate the way in which sensitive and important issues are presented in their personal development lessons. The school helps them to understand the views of others and to respect difference. Pupils benefit from a rich range of careers events, including visits to employers, colleges and universities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, do not attend school regularly enough. This impacts negatively on their learning. The school should explore alternative strategies to improve attendance for all pupils.
- In some subjects, the planned curriculum has not taken full account of the significant gaps in learning that some pupils have experienced. This means that, sometimes, pupils are not ready for the next steps in their learning. The school

should review the curriculum to ensure gaps in pupils' earlier learning are systematically addressed.

- In some lessons, pupils struggle to recall key information from earlier learning. This means they lack the knowledge and skills they need to build on their learning and do well in external examinations. The school should ensure that teachers provide strategies that help pupils remember lesson content over the long term.

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	137209
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	10268363
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	1,226
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	132
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John Vickers
Headteacher	Ana Neofitou
Website	www.westcoventryacademy.org
Dates of previous inspection	15 and 16 October 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the school has become part of an academy trust, the Arthur Terry Learning Partnership (ATLP).
- The school moved into a new building in September 2023.
- Currently, the school uses no alternative provision.
- 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

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement 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.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the trust, the school's advocate, the school's improvement partner, three staff from the trust, including the CEO, the headteacher and senior leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, history, modern foreign languages and art. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum and visited a sample of lessons. Inspectors met with teachers and spoke with pupils about their learning. Inspectors also scrutinised samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders and staff working in pastoral roles. Inspectors spoke with pupils about their wider development and other aspects of school life.
- 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.

Inspection team

Deborah James, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Huw Bishop	Ofsted Inspector
Josie Leese	Ofsted Inspector
Patrick Amieli	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Sims	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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