

Inspection of Theale Green School

Church Street, Reading RG7 5DA

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 May 2022

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	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school. All pupils spoken to said they would recommend it. Pupils feel safe and happy. They say bullying is rare and, when it does occur, teachers sort it out. Expectations of pupils are high. Relationships between staff and pupils are respectful and conflict is rare. Pastoral support is extremely effective.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities to support their wider personal development. They speak highly of the broad extra-curricular programme. Uptake is high and the provision for arts and sport is extensive. Recent additions to the programme include a philosophy club, a humanist society and a coding club.

Large numbers of Year 11 pupils join the thriving sixth form. Staying on rates are high and two thirds of the students proceed to university. The careers programme is strong with beneficial links to local businesses and commerce. Pupils and students particularly enjoy hearing about career options from employers and ex-students.

The school offers a vast range of leadership roles for pupils. These include literacy coordinators, sports captains, anti-bullying ambassadors, transition mentors and the school council. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) value such opportunities to be involved. They are proud of their contribution to the school.

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

The curriculum is ambitious, well considered and carefully constructed. It builds well on the primary phase and meets national curriculum expectations. The sixth-form curriculum builds sequentially on what has gone before. The school has worked resolutely to improve curriculum coherence and challenge. A small number of subjects are still strengthening and embedding the quality of their curriculum in line with best practice in the school.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. This is observed through their confident exposition in the classroom. They use assessment to check pupils' understanding, inform teaching and shape the curriculum. Assessment requirements are designed to prevent unnecessary burdens. The school is working hard to ensure that these practices are fully embedded across all subject areas.

Reading has been a real focus for the school, and leaders have developed a range of strategies to ensure pupils' reading is improved. Computer-based programmes are used successfully to monitor reading progress. Pupils who fall behind receive additional support, including in the use of phonics to help them read words. The school is looking to secure further phonics training for staff.

Pupils with SEND access the full curriculum, with dispensation for a small number to improve their literacy and numeracy. Teaching assistants are well deployed and

skilled at what they do. Pupils with SEND make progress through the curriculum as well as all other pupils. Pupils in the specialist provision are supported by staff who know them well. They are active participants in the school community.

There are clear targets for disadvantaged pupils to improve their attendance and raise their ambition. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils has increased significantly. Many have complex needs which the school supports particularly well. The school is working successfully to raise their attendance and improve their behaviour.

The curriculum for personal development is well considered. It suitably covers relationships and sex education, living in the wider world, and health and well-being. Subject leaders show how their subjects help pupils to explore British values such as diversity and equality. Pupils say that values of respect and tolerance are embedded in the 'Respectful Behaviours Manifesto' and highlighted through assemblies and tutor time.

Sixth-form students are similarly positive about their social, moral and spiritual learning. They give examples of teaching around relationship boundaries, sexual harassment, diversity and animal rights, as well as talks from external speakers such as the local vicar. The school has high expectations for all students. This was confirmed through conversations with subject leaders and sixth-form students.

Leaders have worked with determination to raise the school profile in the community. Improvements in the curriculum, increasing numbers taking the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) and a significant rise in the school roll are testimony to their success. Parents, staff and pupils are incredibly positive about school leadership. Staff feel that their workload is supported well. They say that they are proud to work at the school. They have every reason to be proud.

Governors and trustees know their school well. Regular visits by link governors ensure that governors and trustees are well informed. They are supportive, challenging and enthusiastic. The trust offers considerable support to the school in terms of finance and expertise. The school supports the trust through sharing good practice and supporting other schools.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding leads demonstrate insight, understanding and determination to provide support to pupils who need it. The school has a positive relationship with external agencies and ensures that referrals are made in a timely way. All staff receive regular training and know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil.

Pupils confirm that they feel safe and there is nowhere in school where they do not feel safe. Derogatory or offensive language is not tolerated, and the school takes swift action against those who use it. Pupils say they know how to keep themselves

physically and mentally healthy. There is a strong focus on health, welfare and well-being.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum implementation is not yet fully embedded securely across all subjects. Assessment practices are still being incorporated in some subjects. As a result, teachers are not always clear how to adapt their lessons to maximise learning in these subjects. Leaders should continue to share the very best practice that already exists. They should ensure that curriculum and assessment implementation are fully and securely embedded across all subjects.

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	145945
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	10227797
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
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	646
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	99
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trustees	Gary Headland and Cheri Ashby
Headteacher	Joanna Halliday
Website	www.thealegreen.w-berks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Theale Green School is a much smaller than the average-sized secondary school with a sixth form. It is part of the Activate Learning Education Trust.
- The school became an academy in April 2018. The predecessor academy was judged as requires improvement in May 2017.
- Four pupils attend alternative provision at two registered education providers in West Berkshire and Reading.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical educational qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in English, science, geography and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, talked to teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at examples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, subject leaders, staff and pupils. They looked at the single central record and reviewed the school's safeguarding practices and procedures.
- Inspectors reviewed school policies, curriculum documentation, behaviour logs, attendance records, destination statistics and extra-curriculum registers. The lead inspector met with trust and board members in person and remotely. He also spoke to representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered 149 responses to the Ofsted Parent View online questionnaire and 94 additional written comments from parents. They looked at the survey returns completed by 63 staff and 162 pupils.

Inspection team

Paul Metcalf, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Taj Bhambra	Ofsted Inspector
Cathy Reid	Ofsted Inspector

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