

Wreake Valley Academy

Address: Parkstone Road, Syston, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE7 1LY

Unique reference number (URN): 137983

Inspection report: 28 April 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders quickly and accurately identify when pupils need extra support. They share information about pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and other barriers to learning, so that teachers understand where adjustments are needed. Leaders have planned classroom strategies and professional learning for staff to make sure that all pupils can succeed, whatever their starting points. Leaders and teachers check pupils' progress carefully and review the support they provide, making changes where needed.

The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND known as the BINC (Bradgate Inclusion Centre). Pupils who attend the BINC thrive. They benefit from an ambitious, well-designed curriculum, as well as teaching and support that meets their needs precisely. A small number of pupils attend alternative provision that is carefully selected to meet their needs and interests.

Leaders work closely with the local authority, and other external agencies, to make school a positive experience for pupils who are looked after or known to social care. Typically, staff make sure that these pupils, and other disadvantaged or vulnerable pupils, receive the academic support they need. They provide access to the same extra-curricular opportunities for all pupils. Additional funding such as the pupil premium grant for disadvantaged pupils is used well to make sure that no pupils are left behind.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have a clear understanding of the school's context. They recognise where improvements are needed. The relatively new leadership team has acted decisively and impactfully in a short period of time to bring about improvements to the curriculum, attendance and behaviour. While the positive impact of the changes leaders have made is evident, there is more to do. There are robust systems in place to monitor the effectiveness of all aspects of the school's provision. Leaders continually reflect on the impact of their work and are determined that the school continues to improve.

Trustees are experienced and knowledgeable. They know the school and its priorities, well. Trustees and leaders from the multi-academy trust provide effective support and challenge to school leaders as they work to make further improvements. They ensure that the school fulfils its statutory duties, such as around safeguarding.

Staff are happy and proud to work at the school. They appreciate the high-quality professional learning programme that has been well designed to strengthen their expertise. Leaders prioritise staff's wellbeing and strive to make sure that workloads are manageable.

The majority of parents and carers are positive about the school. They told inspectors that they appreciate the improvements that have been made in recent years.

The school prioritises pupils' personal development. Leaders have planned an ambitious programme underpinned by 'The Wreake Way'. This promotes values such as respect, resilience and readiness to learn. Through lessons in personal, social and health education (PSHE), assemblies and the tutor-time programme, pupils generally develop knowledge securely and are well prepared for adulthood.

The curriculum for PSHE teaches pupils how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. Pupils learn how to maintain positive relationships and avoid risky behaviours. Topics emphasise the importance of active citizenship and the fundamental British values. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures and are encouraged to celebrate diversity. They know about equality laws and understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens. The curriculum is enhanced by enrichment activities, for example a mock trial, which provides further opportunities for pupils to learn about life in modern Britain.

The careers programme has been designed well to prepare pupils for their next stages in education, training or employment. All pupils benefit from personalised careers advice and opportunities to meet with employers and education providers.

Pastoral care is excellent and actively supports pupils' wellbeing. Caring staff keep a watchful eye over pupils. They identify when pupils are vulnerable or struggling with their social, emotional and mental health. Leaders make sure that pupils get the support they need to overcome any challenges.

There is a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities available, including a variety of trips, both overseas and closer to home. The school offers pupils the opportunity to earn the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. A variety of after-school clubs give pupils opportunities to develop their talents and interests in sports, games and the arts. All pupils benefit from these opportunities. Leaders make sure that disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities can take part alongside their peers.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Over time, pupils, including students in the sixth form, have not achieved as well as they might have done in national examinations.

At key stage 4, the proportion of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, who achieve basic pass grades in English and mathematics is similar to the national average. However, too few pupils achieve a strong set of qualifications. This limits the opportunities available as pupils move to their next stage of education or training.

Sixth-form students' attainment and progress in A-level courses is below the national average. In vocational courses, achievement is similar to other students nationally.

The improving curriculum is driving better progress for all pupils. In key stage 3, the curriculum supports pupils to strengthen basic knowledge, skills and vocabulary so that they are prepared for the next stage. In key stages 4 and 5, raised expectations and an improved range of courses to choose from have had a positive impact.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

Attendance rates are lower than the national average and have been for some time. Overall, the proportion of pupils who are frequently absent from school is higher than the national average, although this is not the case in the sixth form. Leaders are determined that attendance should improve. They monitor attendance data carefully. Leaders work closely with pupils and their families to help them overcome any barriers to regular attendance. This is having an impact. Attendance rates have begun to improve, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

In classrooms, pupils typically behave well and show positive attitudes to learning. Most pupils move around the school sensibly and make every effort to get to lessons on time. However, a minority of pupils demonstrate poor behaviour as they make their way to lessons. Pupils arriving late to lessons cause disruption for other pupils. The school has raised expectations of pupils' behaviour and has introduced new systems to promote positive choices. However, staff do not consistently challenge poor behaviour around the school. That said, the vast majority of pupils are polite and respectful. Incidents of bullying or discriminatory behaviour are rare. When they do occur, leaders act quickly and fairly to resolve matters.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Despite recent improvements, the quality of teaching is variable. Although teachers have good subject knowledge, they do not consistently make sure that pupils gain knowledge securely and remember what they have learned. The planned routines for checking pupils' understanding and adapting teaching to address any misconceptions or knowledge gaps are used well in some classrooms. However, sometimes, teachers do not check carefully enough what pupils know, or provide useful feedback to help them deepen their understanding or improve their work.

Leaders provide detailed information to teachers, identifying pupils who face barriers to learning along with strategies to support them. Often this guidance is used well to help pupils overcome their barriers. However, this is sometimes not the case.

Leaders are well aware that the delivery of the curriculum needs to improve. They have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. Staff benefit from high-quality professional learning that is driving improvements.

Leaders have made sure that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to revisit prior learning and reinforce foundational knowledge such as reading, writing and number skills. For example, curriculum leaders have worked alongside feeder primary schools to identify

where pupils have weak basic knowledge and skills. They have planned opportunities to strengthen these.

Post 16 provision

Needs attention 

Over time, students in the sixth form have not achieved as well as other students nationally in external examinations. Leaders recognise this. They have taken steps to strengthen the curriculum and improve the quality of teaching in the sixth form. This is having an impact, although there is still some variability. There are signs that, increasingly, students are progressing well from their starting points. More students are successful in achieving the grades they need to progress to aspirational destinations than previously. However, this is not yet reflected in the published outcomes.

The sixth form offers an extensive and inclusive enrichment programme. This includes leadership roles, volunteering and opportunities to mentor younger pupils at the school. There is an active student union as well as debating and medical societies. The sixth form offers a range of cultural experiences and community-focused activities. Leaders track participation and prioritise opportunities for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as those who are disadvantaged or vulnerable.

Careers education in the sixth form is well planned and delivered effectively. Students benefit from personalised advice and impartial guidance about the range of options available to them after they leave the school.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils increasingly feel a sense of belonging at Wreake Valley Academy. They feel safe at school. Pupils recognise that the culture is changing for the better and that new leadership has had a positive impact. 'The Wreake Way' encourages pupils to be 'ready, resilient and respectful'. This guides the way they learn and behave.

Pupils' wellbeing is a high priority. Caring staff provide nurture and support when pupils are vulnerable. Attendance has begun to improve, although too many pupils are still absent from school too often.

In recent years, pupils, and students in the sixth form, have not achieved as well as pupils and sixth-form students nationally. Leaders are determined to address this. They have strengthened the curriculum offer in key stages 4 and 5. There are raised expectations of what pupils can achieve, supported by improvements in the quality of teaching.

The school is inclusive. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including those in the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND, are well supported to thrive alongside their peers. Disadvantaged pupils benefit from all of the opportunities that the school has to offer.

Behaviour has improved. The vast majority of pupils follow the rules and routines without fuss. Classrooms are typically calm and purposeful. However, a minority of pupils do not

show the high level of respect for others that is expected of them when they move around the school. Bullying is rare and most pupils are confident that staff will deal with incidents quickly and fairly.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities. These include overseas trips and after school clubs offering sports, games and the arts. Many pupils proudly take on leadership responsibilities and participate in the annual school drama productions.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers accurately check pupils' understanding and consistently adapt teaching to address pupils' misconceptions and help pupils build on what they have learned previously, so they are well prepared for ambitious next steps in education, training and employment.
 - Leaders should ensure that staff consistently apply agreed teaching strategies that have been designed to help pupils overcome any barriers to learning and achieve well.
 - Leaders should ensure they continue to work effectively on improving attendance for all pupils.
 - Leaders should ensure that all staff have high expectations of pupils and consistently challenge lateness to lessons and poor behaviour, especially during unstructured times and as pupils move around the school.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Bradgate Education Partnership, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Gareth Nelmes, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Stephen Cotton.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMI.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, other school leaders, staff and pupils during the inspection. Inspectors also spoke with trustees and leaders from the trust, including the CEO and chair of trustees.

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.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school includes a specially resourced provision for 45 pupils with communication and interaction needs.

The school currently makes use of 14 alternative provisions, including 13 that are unregistered.

The headteacher was appointed in September 2024.

Headteacher: Ben Rackley

Lead inspector:

John Spragg, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Gillian Martin, Ofsted Inspector

Ellenor Beighton, Ofsted Inspector

Caroline Barton, Ofsted Inspector

melanie Wicks, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.



This data is from 28 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,126

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,067

School capacity

1,482

Above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

21.36%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 28.9%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

5.51%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

18.03%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Below average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

Resourced provision and SEN unit

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

OTH - Other Difficulty/Disability

What does this mean?

The type of Special Educational Needs provision provided at the school (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	34.2%	45.4%	Below
2023/24 (final)	44.7%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	41.5%	45.3%	Close to average

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	39.7	46.1	Below
2023/24 (final)	42.4	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	39.9	46.3	Below

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.60	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.61	-0.03	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	18.9%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	19.0%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	12.0%	25.2%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	27.0	34.9	Below
2023/24 (final)	30.0	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	26.3	35.0	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-1.42	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	-1.53	-0.57	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	18.9%	53.1%	-34.2 pp
2023/24 (final)	19.0%	53.1%	-34.1 pp
2022/23 (final)	12.0%	52.4%	-40.4 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	27.0	50.4	-23.4
2023/24 (final)	30.0	50.0	-20.0
2022/23 (final)	26.3	50.3	-24.0

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-1.42	0.16	-1.58
2022/23 (final)	-1.53	0.17	-1.69

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (revised)	90%	92%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	90%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	96%	94%	Average

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	28.52	35.00	Below
2023/24 (final)	26.94	34.38	Below
2022/23 (final)	29.98	34.16	Below

A-level value added

A score showing students' progress between the end of key stage 4 and the end of their academic qualification studies.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	-0.3	0.0	Below
2023/24 (revised)	-0.4	0.0	Below

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	11.4%	8.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	10.7%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	9.6%	9.0%	Close to average

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	31.8%	23.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	29.6%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	27.2%	26.5%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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