

The Stockwood Park Academy

Rotheram Avenue, Luton, Bedfordshire LU1 5PP

Inspection dates

9–10 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Over time, the trust and governors have not made sure that the overall effectiveness of the school has remained good.
- Until recently, leaders' view of the quality of the curriculum, teaching and pupils' outcomes in key stages 3 and 4 has not been sharp enough. They did not take appropriate actions to raise standards.
- Pupils' progress and attainment are not good across a range of subjects because the quality of teaching is too variable.
- Pupils' reading and writing skills are underdeveloped. Teachers do not reinforce them sufficiently well in all subjects.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high.
- Some teachers do not use information about pupils' learning well enough to ensure that work meets their needs effectively, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.
- Teachers do not consistently set work that caters for the needs of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.
- Not all teachers use questioning effectively to challenge pupils.
- Some teachers do not use the school's assessment procedures consistently. Pupils do not always know how to improve their work.

The school has the following strengths

- The new principal has an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. He has taken strong action to raise aspirations and improve behaviour.
- Pupils respect each other and behave sensibly.
- Leaders have a high level of expertise in safeguarding. They make a positive difference to pupils' welfare. Pupils feel safe.
- Attendance is improving across the school.
- The sixth form provides a good education. All students who complete the sixth form go on to further education or into apprenticeships.
- Leaders ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a secure understanding of the world around them.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership by:
 - making sure that the trust and governors have a positive impact on improving the overall effectiveness of the school
 - building on the improved relationship between governors and leaders so that there is greater clarity about their respective roles and responsibilities.
- Improve progress and attainment at key stages 3 and 4 by:
 - strengthening the overall quality of teaching by ensuring that training is targeted effectively towards those staff who need it most
 - improving literacy by giving pupils more opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills across a wide range of subjects
 - ensuring that teachers' expectations are constantly high and that they provide work which challenges pupils sufficiently
 - making sure that all teachers plan work that builds on what pupils already know and can do
 - making sure that teachers meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils
 - ensuring that teachers consistently set work to cater for the needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities
 - ensuring that teachers use questioning skilfully to check pupils' learning and deepen their understanding
 - ensuring that all teachers use the school's agreed assessment procedures.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, the school has undergone a period of instability. Until recently, changes to leadership have slowed down the rate of improvement. The trust and governors have failed to manage key aspects of the school to maintain its overall effectiveness.
- While leaders have begun to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, teaching remains too inconsistent. Pupils' progress requires improvement across a range of subjects. Leaders recognise that by prioritising behaviour, they have not focused enough on teaching and learning.
- Although leaders track the progress of pupils well, support strategies have not yet ensured that pupils make at least good progress.
- Almost half the pupils in the school are disadvantaged. In the past, leaders have not used the additional pupil premium funding well enough. New leaders now have a clear strategy for supporting these pupils. However, in lessons, teachers have not always ensured that disadvantaged pupils are given enough support to help them to make good progress.
- Leaders are not ensuring that funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is used effectively. Work is not always matched to their needs, so they do not make sufficient progress.
- Pupils benefit from Year 7 catch-up funding and make progress in small groups. Support is focused on improving reading through phonics lessons and developing writing and mathematical skills.
- Leaders receive support from other schools in the trust and are part of a school improvement project that aims to improve teaching and learning. Leaders encourage teachers to work collaboratively and try out successful teaching strategies to support pupils' learning. However, not all teachers are using these strategies, so these changes are not fully established.
- Leaders have a clear understanding of which aspects of the school need to be better. They have good plans in place to address them.
- Middle leaders, particularly in English, mathematics and science, are working closely together to improve pupils' progress and attainment in their subjects. Through checking their judgements with other teachers in the trust, they are securing a more accurate view of attainment. Their collaborative approach is already having a positive effect on pupils' progress.
- Leaders' revised reporting system gives parents and carers much clearer information about the current progress of their children. The majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, say they find this information valuable.
- The curriculum ensures that pupils follow a wide range of subjects, with choices available at GCSE. After-school clubs in sports, the arts and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award enrich provision. In the sixth form, leaders have worked successfully to broaden the learning opportunities on offer to students. Through an effective partnership with

Chalk Hills Academy, students have access to a wide range of academic and vocational courses across both sites. Leaders have undertaken a joint review with trust leaders to ensure consistency of procedures and practices across the partnership.

- New staff receive good support from school leaders. Newly qualified teachers value the training they receive to help them improve their planning and teaching.
- Leaders provide a range of opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Assemblies and form time celebrate cultural diversity and tolerance, and outside speakers warn against radicalisation. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- There are clear indications that the new principal is making a positive difference to the school. He has quickly won the trust of the wider community. Staff and parents appreciate his honest and collaborative approach and say that there has been a 'big change in culture' since his appointment. Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, praised the work of the school. This was echoed in comments received from parents in the free-text option of their survey. The majority of parents who responded to Parent View would recommend the school to others.

Governance of the school

- Over time, through a period of interim headship and instability in staffing, the governing body has failed to monitor the school effectively. The trust and governors have not sufficiently challenged the information given to them by leaders in order to maintain an accurate overview of the school.
- The school has strengthened governance by recruiting new, local governors to the governing body. The small governing body brings a range of knowledge and experience but is too new to have made an impact on improving the school.
- New governors feel informed by the school and can identify its strengths and weaknesses. They make regular visits to get to know the staff and to review the school's policies and procedures.
- Governors are fully aware of their responsibilities to safeguard pupils in the school. The safeguarding governor meets regularly with senior leaders to check that policy is reflected in practice, both in the school and in alternative provisions used by the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders responsible for safeguarding have a high level of expertise and successfully manage a diverse range of issues. They work closely with families and external agencies and offer good support to vulnerable pupils.
- All necessary checks are carried out when recruiting adults to work with children. Staff and governors undertake regular safeguarding training, including that relating to the government's 'Prevent' duty.

- Pupils are taught how to recognise and keep themselves safe from danger, for example through presentations about radicalisation. The vast majority of pupils who spoke with inspectors, or who responded to Ofsted’s pupil survey, said that they feel safe and well looked after by the school. Pupils are also aware of what to do if they have a concern, and are confident that staff deal with issues effectively.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is too variable across the curriculum at key stages 3 and 4. This results in pupils making inconsistent progress.
- Not all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. This leads to a lack of sufficient challenge, which affects both the quality and quantity of work that pupils produce. It limits their progress.
- Some teachers do not routinely use information about pupils’ prior attainment to plan activities that match their abilities. Tasks are often the same for all pupils. Consequently, some pupils lose interest because they do not find the work challenging, especially the most able.
- Some teachers do not consistently identify and address pupils’ barriers to learning so that their needs are fully met. This results in disadvantaged pupils making slower progress than other pupils.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making slower progress than other pupils with similar starting points.
- In some subjects, teachers apply the school’s own assessment procedures effectively. They show pupils when they have misunderstood and guide them on how to improve. However, this practice is not consistent across all teachers.
- Strategies to improve literacy are underdeveloped. Where practice is strongest, teachers ensure that pupils understand and value the importance of reading and develop extended writing skills. Although reading is a regular feature in form time, it is not embedded across the curriculum.
- In some lessons, teachers routinely challenge pupils with questions. However, this is not common practice.
- Teachers have high expectations of how pupils should behave. Teachers apply the school’s behaviour policy consistently well, with the result that disruption to lessons is rare.
- Some teachers use their strong subject knowledge to challenge and encourage pupils to think and reason. In some English, chemistry, mathematics and geography lessons, for example, inspectors saw teachers expecting pupils to respond to examination criteria so that they can attain the highest levels. However, this is not consistently the case across the school.
- Most teachers have good relationships with their pupils and encourage them to work well. For example, in a Year 7 drama lesson, positive relationships between pupils allowed them to challenge themselves to improve their group performance. Pupils told

inspectors that teaching has improved. They said that teachers support them and help them to learn.

- Key stage 3 and 4 pupils who met with inspectors described English and mathematics as among the most effective subjects. In these subjects, teachers make accurate assessments of pupils' progress and identify gaps in their knowledge and understanding. They use this information to help pupils to build on what they already know and can do.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- There is effective support for pupils and clear procedures in place to ensure that pupils are treated fairly and consistently. Parents are included in any actions taken.
- The assembly programme provides a framework to promote the school's values as well as British values. An assembly on mental health, for example, focused on pupils treating each other with kindness and support. Assemblies are also an important aspect of the school's work to raise pupils' aspirations and reward their efforts in and out of lessons.
- Pupils listen respectfully to the views of others. Both form time and personal, social and health education lessons provide opportunities for learning about broader topical issues, including fundamental British values, staying healthy and keeping safe. Careers guidance is focused on the individual and prepares pupils very well for the next steps in their education or career.
- An extensive extra-curricular programme underpins pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as well as supporting academic study. Pupils enjoy the provision and it is well attended. Leaders monitor pupils' extra-curricular attendance so that adaptations can be made to respond to pupils' needs.
- A small number of pupils are educated by other providers on behalf of the school. Their personal development, attendance, safety and progress are well managed and monitored by the school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The new principal and his team have applied a consistent approach to the management of behaviour. This has improved the way in which pupils behave. In lessons, pupils behave well and do not interrupt the learning of others.
- Pupils are inclusive. Different ages, sexes and backgrounds mix happily. In the corridors, there is a calm and controlled pace of movement. Pupils enjoy the social spaces that are freely available to them and behave appropriately.
- Pupils enter assembly in a calm and purposeful manner. Routines for entry and expectations are well established.

- Bullying is rare. While a very small minority of parents expressed some concerns about bullying in the school, this was not supported by other inspection evidence. Inspectors spoke to pupils across all year groups who said that they do not worry about bullying. They know what to do and who to speak to. Some pupils act as anti-bullying ambassadors to support the work of the school. Pupils are confident that any incidents of bullying are resolved rapidly.
- Pupils say that the school does not tolerate any bad language or discriminatory behaviour, and that their teachers are quick to challenge these things. Pupils believe that those who have a different background or outlook on life to their own are treated with respect. They say that everyone is treated equally. The school promotes an ethos of 'speaking kindly' to others.
- Well-established procedures are in place to ensure that pupils attend regularly. Leaders are improving the attendance of all groups of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Attendance is broadly in line with national averages. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is declining. Pupils appreciate receiving rewards for good attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Across a range of subjects, pupils typically make less progress than they should through key stages 3 and 4. This is because the quality of teaching is too variable.
- Pupils did not make sufficient progress in English or mathematics in 2017. Over the past two years, the proportion of pupils attaining at least a grade 4 in both GCSE English and mathematics was low. In 2017, in mathematics, pupils made better progress than in the previous year but it remained below average.
- Over time, pupils' progress and attainment in science have been low. This has mainly been due to inconsistencies in teaching and changes in staffing. New leaders are making improvements to the teaching of science. However, because the quality of teaching remains variable, pupils still do not consistently make good progress.
- Pupils' progress by the end of key stage 4 in humanities and languages was below average in 2017. Pupils currently in the school are making better progress in these subjects because teachers plan for pupils' different abilities.
- In 2017, in a range of other subjects such as computer science, drama and art, pupils made good progress and their attainment was close to average.
- The progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils over the past two years have been low. They have not made as much progress as other pupils nationally. Leaders have not had a clear understanding of the needs of these pupils and have not ensured that suitable support was in place for them in lessons. This year, new leaders have tried to improve this. The most able current Year 11 disadvantaged pupils are making better progress from their starting points. However, disadvantaged pupils still do not typically make as much progress as they should.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not always make sufficient progress from their starting points. This is because teachers do not always match work to their needs.

- A new subject leader is rapidly improving the progress of current pupils in English through implementing changes to teaching and assessment. Pupils currently in Year 11 are making good progress in English.
- In mathematics, leaders have introduced large-group seminars and extra-curricular support to boost the learning of pupils in Year 11. At key stage 3, pupils are developing a stronger base of knowledge and understanding and are making good progress.
- New leaders are identifying strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance. They have implemented a more rigorous analysis of pupils' assessment information. Through their regular meetings with faculty leaders, senior leaders check on the progress that the pupils make. Leaders' findings show that some staff are not using the assessment information consistently well to plan learning for pupils of all abilities. Even so, most pupils' progress is beginning to improve.
- Leaders provide pupils with effective advice and guidance to help them choose their next steps. All pupils at the end of Year 11 either join the school's sixth form, begin an apprenticeship or go on to study elsewhere.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Leaders know the students well. Students receive effective support and guidance on the most appropriate courses for them to study. This contributes to good retention rates between Years 12 and 13.
- Over the past three years, attainment in academic and vocational subjects has been in line with national averages. Students' attainment on entry is low but they make good progress, particularly in vocational subjects.
- Students joining Year 12 without a grade 4 in GCSE English or mathematics receive the support they need to attain these qualifications. They make good progress and improve their grades by the time they leave the sixth form. Success rates are above the national average.
- Leaders have made sure that disadvantaged students receive consistent support. In 2017, these students made better progress in academic subjects than their non-disadvantaged peers.
- The quality of teaching in the sixth form is good. Detailed subject knowledge, effective planning and thorough questioning of students promote good progress. Inspectors noted strong relationships between staff and students and established routines in lessons. Students speak positively about the support they receive from their teachers.
- Behaviour in the sixth form is good. Students display maturity and respect for others. Leaders offer students opportunities to contribute to the school community, such as through fundraising and supporting younger pupils.
- There is a well-established programme of enrichment activities and, in form time, students are encouraged to explore a range of personal issues, such as financial planning and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Students respond willingly and positively to these discussions.
- Careers advice and guidance for students in the sixth form are good. Students appreciate the support they receive. All of them have opportunities to develop work-

related skills and carry out work experience. An increasing proportion of students are gaining places on university courses or apprenticeship schemes in employment.

- Attendance is improving, particularly in Year 12. Leaders use a range of strategies to ensure that pupils attend regularly and they monitor attendance across both sites closely. The school provides transportation between sites to secure students' safety and punctuality.

School details

Unique reference number	135338
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	10046390

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,344
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	55
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	John Buck
Principal	Richard Found
Telephone number	01582 722 333
Website	http://stockwoodpark.thesharedlearningtrust.org.uk/
Email address	stockwoodpark@thesharedlearningtrust.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–9 May 2015

Information about this school

- The Stockwood Park Academy is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The school joined The Shared Learning Trust, Luton in March 2015.
- The sixth form works in partnership with Chalk Hills Academy, Luton, which is also part of The Shared Learning Trust.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average.

- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average.
- The school meets the government's minimum floor standards, which set the minimum requirements for pupils' attainment and progress at key stage 4.
- The school meets the Department for Education's (DfE) definition of a coasting school based on key stage 4 academic performance results from 2015 to 2017.
- The school is participating in a DfE Strategic School Improvement Fund project.
- Alternative provision is provided at Reach, Shine Learning Centre, Evolve, The Avenue Centre for Education, Luton and The Seeds of Change, Bedford.
- Since the departure of the previous principal in September 2016, there have been several changes to the school leadership team. The current principal took up the substantive post, from being an interim principal, in April 2017. Two new vice-principals joined the school in September 2017.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited parts of 65 lessons, including 35 with school leaders. They visited assemblies and heard pupils read aloud.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, newly qualified teachers, the chair of the local governing body and the trust’s chief executive. Telephone calls were made to the local authority and alternative education providers.
- Inspectors looked at: the single central record of recruitment checks; safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures; self-evaluation and improvement plans; minutes of governing body meetings; records of pupils’ behaviour and attendance; information about the progress and attainment of current pupils; and other information provided by senior leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils from all year groups individually and in groups.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils’ work. They considered 28 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, and 24 free-text responses sent by parents. They also considered 47 responses to Ofsted’s questionnaire for staff and 40 responses to Ofsted’s questionnaire for pupils.

Inspection team

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Helen Loughran	Ofsted Inspector
Paul O’Shea	Ofsted Inspector

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