

Wolverley CofE Secondary School

Address: Blakeshall Lane, Wolverley, Kidderminster, Worcestershire, DY11 5XQ

Unique reference number (URN): 135061

Inspection report: 10 February 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.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Pupils do not consistently achieve as well as they could. Pupils' attainment in national tests at the end of key stage 4, in some subjects, has been low over time. In other subjects, pupils' attainment has been closer to national averages, including for disadvantaged pupils. However, there is not a trend of improvement over time in all subjects. The variable delivery of the curriculum means that some pupils develop gaps in their knowledge that are not routinely addressed.

Pupils develop secure foundations in reading and writing. This supports them to be ready for the next stages in their learning. However, pupils do not achieve as well in their numeracy. Pupils' numeracy often lacks sufficient detail to explain their learning and thinking clearly. Most pupils, and students in the sixth form, successfully secure places in education, employment or training when they leave school. However, many pupils, including some high prior attaining pupils, do not achieve as well as they should.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

Leaders have a clearly understood 'attend and achieve' strategy to tackle issues of poor attendance. Working with parents and carers to identify barriers to pupils attending school regularly has been particularly effective. Careful analysis of attendance data ensures that leaders monitor the effectiveness of their actions for individual pupils and pupil groups. This work is showing some improvements in how regularly pupils attend, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. However, leaders recognise there is further work to do to ensure that pupils attend school more regularly.

The school's behaviour policy is not consistently applied by staff. Some pupils' attitudes to learning vary. In addition, some pupils do not demonstrate respect towards each other or adults. Leaders effectively analyse the reasons for poor behaviour. Some lessons are calm and orderly. However, this is inconsistent. When, in some lessons, pupils lose interest, lack engagement or disrupt the learning, this is not always managed swiftly or effectively. Some pupils who struggle to manage their behaviour or emotions are supported well through interventions. However, leaders know there is further work needed to raise expectations and ensure that staff and pupils demonstrate positive behaviours more consistently in line with the school values.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

The delivery of the curriculum is variable. Sometimes, teaching approaches do not enable pupils to learn sufficiently well. Leaders are accurate in their assessment of where teaching is effective and where it needs to improve. However, the actions they take to address less secure teaching are not currently having the necessary impact to bring about rapid improvement.

Typically, teachers have secure subject knowledge and explain new learning clearly. The curriculum is designed to help pupils build knowledge over time in an appropriate sequence. Although the curriculum design is helping to bring about improvements, in some subjects the quality of teaching is mixed. Where teaching is less effective, teachers do not routinely check pupils' understanding. They do not identify or adapt their teaching to address gaps and misconceptions that some pupils have consistently well. Expectations of what pupils are able to do are not high enough. The standard of work accepted from pupils is below what they are capable of producing.

Pupils are well supported to secure the reading and writing skills that they need to ensure that they are ready for the next steps in their learning. Reading is prioritised in the school, and the school is developing more focus on pupils' spoken communication well. However, pupils do not yet have sufficient effective opportunities to develop and improve their numeracy skills, particularly in key stage 3.

Inclusion

Needs attention 

Leaders are knowledgeable about how best to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff receive regular training to help them to support pupils, especially pupils with SEND. However, staff do not always identify needs accurately and, as a result, they do not always adjust provision so that pupils successfully access their learning. Pupils' personal learning plans identify precise strategies to help each pupil well. However, not all teachers implement these strategies consistently. Pupils who experience barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing are not always supported well enough with these strategies.

Staff build positive relationships with families before pupils join the school. This enables effective partnership working to commence swiftly. The views of pupils and of their parents and carers are used to shape the support that is provided for pupils. Alternative provision is only used when appropriate and in pupils' best interests.

Leaders' use of pupil premium funding is effective. Pupils who are disadvantaged are making improved progress through the curriculum from their starting points. The school uses research-based strategies and collaboration with other providers. However, the school does not review precisely which strategies are the most effective to remove barriers for these pupils.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

Currently, the quality of the school's provision is variable. Leaders, including those responsible for governance, lack precision in some areas of their work. As a result, some improvements have not been maintained over time or have been too slow. For example, while leaders have successfully strengthened their work around attendance and writing skills, they have not had the same success with improving the consistent delivery of teaching and learning across subjects.

Since the last inspection, there has been significant change to the leadership and governance of the school. Furthermore, since the start of the academic year, leadership responsibilities in the school have needed to be further refined. These changes have been

positive. However, they have affected how quickly leaders can demonstrate the impact of actions that they have taken.

Staff are proud to work at the school; they feel that leaders are considerate of their wellbeing. Staff are in receipt of regular training opportunities. However, in some areas of the curriculum, such as checking pupils' understanding and adapting learning to meet the needs of pupils, leaders have been slow to address deficiencies in staff expertise. Staff also lack clarity about what leaders' precise expectations are following training, for example regarding managing pupils' behaviour.

Governors have a broad understanding of the school's work. They are committed to supporting the school. However, while governors' statutory responsibilities are met and decisions are made in the best interests of pupils, there remains a lack of evaluation around which actions have the most, or least, impact. Systems for checking the effectiveness of the curriculum and teaching are not thorough enough. As a result, governors are not sufficiently robust in challenging leaders. They do not hold leaders to account effectively when checking the impact of some of their work.

Personal development and wellbeing

Needs attention 

Leaders have established a culture that promotes diversity and difference. However, although pupils understand the importance of being tolerant of others, this is not always reflected in how they interact with their peers. While there is, generally, a harmonious atmosphere, too often pupils show a lack of respect towards each other and to adults.

Leaders provide a suitable curriculum for personal, social, health and economic education. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, both online and in the local area. They learn about healthy relationships and fundamental British values. Pupils readily share their understanding of the school values, although some pupils do not demonstrate them as routine. In the main, pupils develop an age-appropriate understanding in readiness for life in modern Britain.

Leaders have taken thoughtful actions to ensure that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, engage in activities that enable them to explore new interests. For instance, many pupils take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, ski trips and 'poetry live' events. Similarly, leaders reduce barriers to pupils participating in enrichment opportunities, such as visits to theatres and attending residential. Many pupils speak enthusiastically about the opportunities they have to nurture new talents and interests. Pupils also speak positively about their leadership roles, such as eco and mental health ambassadors. These opportunities enable pupils to develop their responsibility and organisational skills. Students in the sixth form welcome the time they spend with younger pupils to support them.

Where there are visiting speakers, pupils gain secure knowledge about higher education and the world of work. This encourages pupils to see themselves in a wide range of careers and professions. Leaders carefully identify pupils who may benefit from additional guidance when needed. However, pupils are not as well informed about opportunities that are available to them when they leave school as they could be. Further work is necessary to provide robust and effective careers guidance for pupils.

Historically, students have not achieved well. Outcomes in national examinations have been low, although in some vocational courses students achieve much better. Leaders have a longer-term development plan beginning to take shape to address this. There has not been sufficient time for the impact of this plan to be evident.

Behaviour in the sixth form is positive. Many students engage well with school. Relationships with staff are caring. Attendance remains variable and is an area leaders continue to promote so that students' progress through the curriculum improves. Within lessons, staff do not consistently adapt learning well, nor do they always meet the needs of students effectively. This hinders students' learning in many subjects. Some, but not all, students who face barriers to their learning and/or well-being are given the support they need to do well.

Currently, there is no wide-ranging personal development programme in the sixth form. A few students are involved in the wider life of the school as school leaders. Students receive some careers guidance to make informed choices about their next steps. For example, there are some opportunities to meet employers and education providers. However, leaders know that there is more to do to offer students a breadth of opportunities and experiences for life beyond the sixth form.

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

Pupils experience a school going through a period of transition. The school has significantly changed since the last inspection, with many changes to staffing and governance in recent months. There are inconsistencies in pupils' experiences in lessons and in how pupils behave, including in how staff respond to any disruption.

Leaders identify the barriers that pupils may face in order to provide an inclusive, ambitious education that improves life chances. However, these barriers are not successfully overcome for some pupils. Pupils, including those who are high prior attaining, do not achieve as well as they could in many subjects. Pupils experience a curriculum that is ambitious and broad. However, in some subjects, teaching activities do not help pupils to build securely on their prior learning. Leaders are beginning to address some of these historical weaknesses, such as how effectively learning is adapted to meet the needs of all pupils. However, these weaknesses are at the earliest stages of being improved.

Pupils' attendance is improving. They are safe in school and know how to report concerns quickly. However, pupils' behaviour is variable. Pupils understand the 'Wolverley Way' which demonstrates leaders' high behaviour expectations. Some lessons are productive, and there are some clear routines that many pupils follow. That said, too often, at social times and in lessons, pupils lose interest and disrupt others. Pupils report that there is a focus on developing positive relationships and being respectful. However, there are a number of pupils who are not respectful to each other or to staff. Where incidents of bullying happen, not all pupils are confident that this will be dealt with quickly and consistently.

Leaders provide pupils with cultural experiences such as visits to New York, London and Nottingham's Poetry Live event. Pupils take on roles, such as those of sports leaders, which develop their sense of belonging and responsibility. However, the school does not fully support pupils' personal development. Although pupils have some preparation for their next steps, they do not fully benefit from an effective careers provision.

Next steps

- Leaders, including those responsible for governance, should ensure that there is greater precision when evaluating how effectively strategies and actions are implemented across the school.
 - Leaders should ensure that the post-16 curriculum, and its delivery, is carefully reviewed to meet the needs of all students and enable them to achieve well.
 - Leaders should ensure that checks on pupils' understanding are used consistently to support pupils in remembering and using the key skills and knowledge that they need.
 - Leaders should ensure that adaptations are made to teaching and assessment to enable pupils, including those who face barriers to their learning and those who are high attaining, to receive effective support to deepen their knowledge and key skills across the curriculum and achieve all that they are capable of.
 - Leaders should ensure that their high expectations for behaviour are understood and demonstrated by pupils and staff so that behaviour is positive and respectful across the school.
 - Leaders should ensure that all pupils are provided with a consistently delivered, well-structured and systematic careers programme to prepare them effectively for life beyond the school.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Nicki Wright.

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 (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the school leadership team, members of staff and groups of pupils during the inspection. They also spoke to representatives from the local authority, the diocese and the board of governors, including the chair of governors. An extensive number of lessons were visited across a range of subjects. Pupils' classwork was also considered.

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 makes use of 4 registered alternative provisions.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection. There has been a change in staff, senior leadership, and governance.

Headteacher: Mark Turner

Lead inspector:

Stuart Clarkson, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Sarah Malam, Ofsted Inspector

Patrick Amieli, Ofsted Inspector

Nazya Ghalib, Ofsted Inspector

Niall Gallagher, 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 10 February 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

960

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

1,008

Close to 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: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

27.60%

Close to 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

3.02%

Close to 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

12.19%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Close to 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)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (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 (revised)	33.3%	45.4%	Below
2023/24 (final)	31.6%	45.9%	Below
2022/23 (final)	48.6%	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 (revised)	42.4	46.0	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	41.5	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	45.2	46.3	Close to average

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)	-0.41	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.02	-0.03	Close to average

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 (revised)	20.5%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	11.9%	25.8%	Below
2022/23 (final)	30.6%	25.2%	Close to average

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 (revised)	34.8	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	34.2	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	37.3	35.0	Close to average

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)	-0.45	-0.57	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.04	-0.57	Above

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 (revised)	20.5%	53.1%	-32.6 pp
2023/24 (final)	11.9%	53.1%	-41.2 pp
2022/23 (final)	30.6%	52.4%	-21.9 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 (revised)	34.8	50.4	-15.6
2023/24 (final)	34.2	50.0	-15.8

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	37.3	50.3	-13.0

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)	-0.45	0.16	-0.61
2022/23 (final)	-0.04	0.17	-0.21

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 (provisional)	96%	91%	Above
2022 leavers (revised)	92%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	95%	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 (revised)	18.40	34.99	Below
2023/24 (final)	25.53	34.38	Below
2022/23 (final)	27.67	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 (revised)	-1.2	0.0	Below
2023/24 (revised)	-0.3	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 (2 term)	9.0%	8.1%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	9.2%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	9.2%	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 (2 term)	25.7%	21.9%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (3 term)	27.7%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	27.8%	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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