

Inspection of Tewkesbury Academy

Ashchurch Road, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire GL20 8DF

Inspection dates:	29 and 30 April 2025
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 principal of this school is Kathleen McGillicuddy. This school is part of the Cabot Learning Federation (CLF), which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Steve Taylor, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Professor Yvonne Beach.

What is it like to attend this school?

Tewkesbury Academy, with the support of the trust, has made significant improvements to the school. These changes are valued by many of the pupils, parents and carers and staff. Leaders have ensured the school is safe and that pupils have trusted adults to help them with any concerns that they may have. The school is clear that bullying is not tolerated. It provides pupils with routes to report concerns so that these can be addressed.

The school has raised its expectations for pupils' behaviour. The behaviour system for sanctions and rewards is clear and fair. However, at times some pupils' behaviour falls below expectations, and this is not always challenged by staff. On these occasions, pupils become frustrated that the behaviour of others impacts on their learning. Pupils want the high expectations upheld in all areas of school life.

The school is ambitious for all pupils to achieve well. Pupils are increasingly successful in achieving qualifications. They receive the help and guidance they need to choose between future education, employment and training options that are appropriate for their ambitions. This means that most pupils and sixth-form students move successfully on to their next steps.

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

The school has adopted and adapted the trust curriculum. This is bespoke and tailored to the needs of pupils at this school. For example, pupils learn about the rich local history of Tewkesbury. Pupils study a broad range of subjects at each key stage. The school curriculum enables pupils to study the GCSE qualifications that form the English Baccalaureate. Currently, the number of pupils completing this is low, but leaders are considering how to raise this further.

The trust provides staff at all levels with professional development. Networks of support and challenge have enabled the school to make rapid improvements to the standard of education it provides. Previous sixth form published outcomes have been low. However, changes made to the curriculum and the wider support for students mean that current students are now significantly better prepared for their qualifications.

Reading is important at this school. Pupils who need additional support to develop their reading are quickly identified. They receive swift and effective help to improve their confidence and fluency. Classes read high-quality texts to promote discussion and debate. The library promotes reading through events such as author visits, which are widely enjoyed by pupils.

The school accurately identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers are provided with the information they need to adapt the curriculum effectively. Where these adaptations are provided, pupils with SEND learn as well as their peers.

Attendance is a key priority for the school. The school closely tracks absence, identifying and addressing any barriers for individual pupils. This work is having a positive impact. Persistent absence has reduced and there are sustained increases in attendance. The school has the capacity and determination to continue this work to ensure the attendance of all pupils continues to rise.

Personal development opportunities are improving pupils' engagement with school. The school creates a sense of belonging through student leadership roles in the house system and student council. Extra-curricular clubs, such as craft, 'Voice Box' and fishing club, develop pupils' individual talents and interests. Pupils are proud to represent their school at sport and in musical performances at Tewkesbury Abbey.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and well. This includes learning how to look after their physical and mental health. Relationship and sex education is age appropriate. Pupils understand the fundamental British values, such as the importance of tolerance and respect for others. Careers activities, including employer visits, raise pupils' aspirations. This preparation for adult life continues into the sixth form through the comprehensive 'Futures' programme of lessons and enrichment activities.

The school has been through a period of change and improvement. Those responsible for governance understand their roles and provide both support and challenge. The workloads of leaders and staff are considered by the school and trust. However, some parents and staff have not had sufficient opportunity to hear about improvements and provide constructive feedback to the school to resolve their remaining concerns. There is a clear drive from the school to continue the school improvement work that has been undertaken. The whole-school community is keen to be part of this ongoing work to benefit pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasion, the high expectations for pupils' behaviour are not upheld across school. When this happens, pupils' learning is disrupted. The trust should ensure that the school's behaviour systems are consistently implemented to maintain high standards of pupil conduct across all areas of school life.
- Communication between the school and stakeholders, such as parents, is not as effective it could be. Parents are not fully aware of the improvements that have been made and the positive impact that these are having on pupils' experiences. There are insufficient opportunities for stakeholders to provide constructive feedback to the school. The trust should ensure that effective communication between the school and

all stakeholders is established so that there are opportunities to share and receive feedback about the school's work.

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	137752
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10378930
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	1,170
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	149
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Professor Yvonne Beach
CEO of the trust	Steve Taylor
Principal	Kathleen McGillicuddy
Website	www.tewkesburyacademy.clf.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 October and 8 December 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Cabot Learning Federation. The school joined this trust in July 2023.
- 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 school uses three registered and one unregistered alternative provisions.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements

(quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth-form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with school leaders at all levels. Inspectors also spoke with teaching staff, support staff, trust executive leaders, local governors and a representative of the trust board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, art, music and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussion about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The sixth-form provision was considered through the deep dives as well as through additional visits during the inspection.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils, including representatives from the pupil leadership group and sixth-form students.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at lunchtime and breaktimes.
- Inspectors viewed a range of school documentation, including the minutes of governance meetings, the school's self-evaluation documents and improvement plans.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the view 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.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey for parents and carers, Ofsted Parent View, as well as responses to the staff survey and pupil survey.

Inspection team

Sara Berry, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Helen Kerr	Ofsted Inspector
Alun Williams	Ofsted Inspector
Jo Butler	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Lovett	Ofsted Inspector

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