

Welbeck Academy

Address: Flodden Street, NE6 2QL

Unique reference number (URN): 138577

Inspection report: 25 November 2025

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.

Strong standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders are meticulous in tracking both pupils' attendance and behaviour. Attendance has been low in recent years but leaders' highly effective intervention has improved attendance for many pupils in the school. It is notable that this work has significantly reduced rates of persistent absence. The school's approach to improving attendance is innovative and relentless. Staff are 'attendance champions'. They provide dedicated support to targeted pupils to improve their attendance over time. It is clear that attendance is everyone's business. This leads to improving attendance over time, with notable improvement for some groups such as disadvantaged pupils.

Behaviour is exemplary in and around school. Pupils navigate their large school site calmly. They know that their one school rule helps to keep them safe and enables them to get on with their learning. Classrooms are respectful, calm and purposeful. Learning is rarely disrupted by others. If pupils display behaviour that does not meet leaders' high expectations, the school expertly supports them to manage themselves effectively. This helps them get back to learning quickly. Significant incidents of poor behaviour are rare, and bullying, although not common, is dealt with effectively.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

The school's well-designed curriculum helps pupils to carefully build their knowledge and skills over time. Staff ensure that the curriculum provides ample opportunity for pupils to revisit and embed their learning. There is careful consideration of how pupils become successful readers, writers and mathematicians. For example, teaching supports early readers in key stage 1 to read scientific words with confidence, practising the sounds that they know. Progression in writing across the school is expertly taught. Pupils master the mechanics of handwriting and sentence structure in key stage 1, enabling them to write with precision and creativity as they move into key stage 2.

Across the curriculum, pupils benefit from highly skilled teachers and support staff who expertly help them to build their skills and knowledge. Leaders and staff use assessment precisely. They regularly check for any gaps in pupils' learning, assess pupils' progress and provide the appropriate support to help pupils to keep up with their peers. Thoughtful and sensitive adaptations to the curriculum support pupils with additional vulnerabilities to work alongside their peers. Staff prioritise ensuring that pupils embed core knowledge and skills. This creates secure foundations for pupils' next steps. The curriculum and its implementation ensure that leaders' highly ambitious vision becomes a reality. Leaders make swift and astute decisions to ensure that pupils receive a high-quality curriculum.

Early years

Strong standard ●

Children make a great start in early years. Warm and caring relationships between children and staff mean that children arrive in school happy and smiling. Before children join, the

school builds positive relationships with families. This helps children to settle very well into school life.

The curriculum is carefully sequenced so that children build and revisit their learning. This helps prepare children well for Year 1. Children who start school in Nursery are especially well prepared for life in key stage 1 by the end of Reception Year. Leaders rightly place a high priority on the importance of communication and language. Children in the 2-year-old provision enjoy singing songs and learning new language. When developing fine motor skills, children are introduced to language like 'pushing' and 'pulling'. Staff consistently use high-quality interactions to model and support children with their language development. This complements the school's approach to early reading and oracy. Children enjoy books across early years and make a positive start in learning to read, including in phonics lessons.

Whenever children join in early years, leaders and staff are experts at understanding each child's starting points. For example, children who join in the Reception Year with lower starting points receive precise support to help them to catch up quickly.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

This is a highly inclusive school. Leaders have an expert understanding of the needs of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from a range of adaptations that help them to learn and achieve alongside their peers. Any pupils who require further academic support are promptly identified and supported. This includes through interventions such as 'readiness' groups, which provide pupils with additional support to help them to access new learning. Such support helps them to stay on track with their learning.

Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive prompt and targeted support to develop new language skills. When needed, the school makes effective use of specialist advice to support the most vulnerable pupils in school. For example, pupils who may face challenging circumstances have access to counsellors.

Leaders and staff are aspirational for all pupils in the school. It is everyone's job to help pupils to succeed. Well-trained staff take effective, well-chosen action at the right time to make sure that no pupil is left behind. The school meticulously ensures that any additional support has the intended impact. The school uses pupil premium funding highly effectively so that disadvantaged pupils make the best possible progress through the curriculum.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Everyone's relentless focus to improve outcomes and experiences for pupils in this school is present in every aspect of school life. This ensures that pupils feel a deep sense of belonging and achieve well. The highest of expectations are shared by leaders, staff and those responsible for governance alike.

Leaders' understanding of the context in which they work is detailed. Leaders and staff put pupils' needs and their achievement at the centre of the school's priorities. Leaders make

the right decisions at the right time. Alongside local governors, trustees and the trust, leaders are resolute in assuring themselves of the impact of their work.

Staff are well supported to make positive changes in school. Carefully connected training upskills staff to lead on school priorities. This strengthens the quality of the curriculum and outcomes for pupils. Leaders ensure that staff have the time to put their professional learning into practice successfully.

Those responsible for governance and the trust provide expertise, challenge and support to ensure that the school continues to develop well. They ensure that statutory duties are fulfilled and maintain oversight of leaders' and staff's wellbeing. Leaders unequivocally act in the best interest of pupils, including those facing a range of disadvantage and vulnerability.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

The school's carefully mapped out personal development offer affords pupils high-quality opportunities to extend their learning. Disadvantaged pupils benefit considerably from the school's approach. Central to this is the school's personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. This helps pupils acquire the important knowledge needed to live a happy, healthy and safe life. The school prioritises topics that are relevant to life in modern Britain. Pupils also learn, for example, about the consequences of knife crime and gangs. They discuss these topics with impressive maturity and understanding. Additionally, pupils demonstrate a detailed understanding of healthy relationships, equality and equity. They are supported very effectively to understand different perspectives, cultures and beliefs.

Pupils value the numerous school visits and experiences that the school provides. This includes overnight experiences that start in Year 1, when pupils camp out in school overnight. Pupils know how their trips link to their learning. The school also provides pupils with opportunities to broaden their horizons, including learning about different careers. These are woven through other aspects of the school's PSHE curriculum and multi-academy trust's 'childhood pledge' for all ages. The pledge ensures that younger pupils meet with someone who wears a uniform for work, for example. Older pupils have opportunities to visit a local university and experience university life. This helps pupils know what they need to do to pursue their careers and aspirations. Pupils also learn about inspirational people. This helps them celebrate diversity and difference. They understand and live out fundamental British values in their discussions about what makes different people and cultures unique. Leaders ensure that pupils have the chance to engage in additional clubs and activities. A diverse range of lunchtime clubs means that everyone can enjoy this wider offer. For example, pupils enjoy knitting, dance and dodgeball over the course of the week, alongside other activities.

Expected standard ●

Achievement

Expected standard ●

The school has taken prompt and effective action to ensure that an increasing number of pupils are now ready for their next stage in learning at the end of Year 6. This can be seen in pupils' attainment in more recent end of key stage 2 outcomes, which are close to national figures. This means that, typically, pupils have developed secure skills in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave school. Disadvantaged pupils do especially well here.

Younger pupils make a positive start to learning to read, write and use numbers. Pupils' knowledge in the wider curriculum is secure and develops well over time. They recall recent and past knowledge with precision, with pupils using well-taught oracy skills to explain their understanding. Pupils' achievement across other areas, such as the Year 4 multiplication times table check, also shows clear improvement over time. Pupils are generally well prepared for their next stages in education. Nevertheless, leaders know that pupils' achievement can improve further. Their ongoing emphasis on providing a high-quality curriculum demonstrates their effective work to strengthen all pupils' readiness for their next steps in learning.

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

Pupils flourish in their development at this school. The school places pupils' belonging at the centre of its vision and ethos. This is lived out by the whole school community. The school provides pupils with a safe place to learn and grow. From the moment children arrive in early years through to Year 6 they get the right support at the right time. This helps them to be successful in their learning and feel safe. Leaders and staff show genuine care for pupils. Pupils are polite, courteous and ready to learn. They feel safe, and their behaviour is exemplary in and around school. Bullying is uncommon and dealt with effectively. Pupils take pride in their learning and achievements.

Leaders and staff know their diverse community extremely well. They take prompt and effective action to make sure that they understand any barriers to learning that pupils may face. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or those who are eligible for free school meals. The school provides extensive opportunities alongside a carefully planned and rigorous academic curriculum offer. This enables pupils to leave the school ready for their next stages in education.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum enables pupils to develop core skills and knowledge. Pupils become confident readers, writers and mathematicians during their time in school. The school's focus on oracy enables older pupils to engage in healthy debate and supports younger pupils to use and develop key vocabulary.

A carefully considered wider enrichment offer affords pupils a wide range of opportunities. For example, pupils benefit from on-site counselling. They also visit the local university to broaden horizons. All of this enables pupils to understand the world in which they live. Pupils are kind to each other and live out fundamental British values across the school day.

Next steps

- Leaders should further refine the rigorous implementation of the curriculum to strengthen achievement and make sure that all pupils achieve as well as they can.
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About this inspection

This school is part of WISE Academies, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Zoe Carr, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Margaret Wright-Stephenson.

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.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other school leaders during the inspection. Inspectors spoke with representatives from the local governing body, trustees, other leaders within the trust and the CEO from the trust.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not use any alternative provision.

The school also, under the same registration, runs a nursery including provision for 2-year-olds.

Headteacher: Louise Saunders

Lead inspector:

Emily Stevens, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Richard Jones, His Majesty's Inspector

Helen Haunch, Ofsted Inspector

Katie Hall, His Majesty's 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 25 November 2025

School and pupil context

Total pupils

472

Well above 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: 272

School capacity

420

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: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

75.06%

Well above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 26.3%

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

3.60%

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: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

20.55%

Above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well above 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

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	50%	61%	Below
2024/25	65%	62%	Close to average
2023/24	58%	61%	Close to average
2022/23	29%	60%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	62%	74%	Below
2024/25	75%	75%	Close to average
2023/24	68%	74%	Below
2022/23	46%	73%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	60%	72%	Below
2024/25	71%	72%	Close to average
2023/24	66%	72%	Close to average
2022/23	42%	71%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	71%	73%	Close to average
2024/25	78%	74%	Close to average
2023/24	78%	73%	Close to average
2022/23	58%	73%	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 reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	47%	46%	Close to average
2024/25	64%	47%	Above
2023/24	52%	46%	Close to average
2022/23	28%	44%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	61%	62%	Close to average
2024/25	77%	63%	Above
2023/24	63%	62%	Close to average
2022/23	46%	60%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	55%	59%	Close to average
2024/25	72%	59%	Above
2023/24	59%	58%	Close to average
2022/23	38%	58%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	68%	60%	Above
2024/25	77%	61%	Above
2023/24	74%	59%	Above
2022/23	56%	59%	Close to average

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 reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	47%	68%	-21 pp
2024/25	64%	69%	-5 pp
2023/24	52%	67%	-15 pp
2022/23	28%	66%	-38 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	61%	80%	-19 pp
2024/25	77%	81%	-4 pp
2023/24	63%	80%	-17 pp
2022/23	46%	78%	-32 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	55%	78%	-23 pp
2024/25	72%	78%	-6 pp
2023/24	59%	78%	-19 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23	38%	77%	-39 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	68%	80%	-12 pp
2024/25	77%	81%	-4 pp
2023/24	74%	79%	-6 pp
2022/23	56%	79%	-23 pp

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 (1 term)	5.8%	5.1%	Close to average
2023/24	7.6%	5.5%	Above
2022/23	7.8%	5.9%	Above

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 (1 term)	17.4%	14.3%	Close to average
2023/24	26.0%	14.6%	Above
2022/23	22.9%	16.2%	Above

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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