

Inspection of Ashlawn School

Ashlawn Road, Hillmorton, Rugby, Warwickshire CV22 5ET

Inspection dates:	3 and 4 June 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Inadequate

The principal of this school is Paul Brockwell. This school is part of the Transforming Lives Educational Trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), James Higham, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Guy French.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school that has undergone significant improvement since its previous graded inspection. Pupils, staff and leaders are right to be proud of the role they have all played in addressing the areas of weakness that had been identified. There is a shared belief in the school's vision of everyone giving 'our best, always'.

There has been a profound shift in the culture of the school. There is now a sense of community and of caring for each other. For example, sixth-form students 'pay it forward' by supporting younger pupils as mentors. The school's 'CARE pillars' of 'community, aspiration, respect and excellence' are threaded through all aspects of school life. Everyone is clear about the importance of respect, both towards each other and the school environment. Pupils value the many ways they can now raise any concerns that they may have. They trust that staff will support them.

Parents and carers, along with pupils and staff, know how much behaviour has improved. Expectations are high and communicated clearly. Pupils manage themselves well at social times. Lessons are typically calm and purposeful, with pupils able to get on with their learning. Most pupils work hard and achieve well.

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

Trustees, along with trust and school leaders, took appropriate and decisive action in response to the outcomes of the previous inspection. All areas for improvement have been addressed effectively and are no longer areas of weakness. Indeed, the school's work to support pupils' reading and build a 'reading community' is now an area of real strength.

The school is ambitious for all pupils in both the grammar and non-selective streams. There is a well-designed curriculum in place that ensures pupils develop strong knowledge and skills within each subject. Most pupils do well in their examinations. However, some disadvantaged pupils do not achieve as well as their peers and do not gain the qualifications in English and mathematics that they need for their next stage in education. This is often because they are persistently absent from school and miss out on key learning.

The school has made improvements to the quality of classroom practice and provided staff with high-quality professional development to support this. The school's chosen teaching approaches are adapted to match the demands of individual subjects. However, there is some variation in how effectively lessons are delivered within each subject area. While there is some very strong practice, this is not a consistent standard across each subject. For example, some teachers are more skilful in their use of questioning or choosing learning activities that encourage pupils' engagement with their learning. However, this is not consistently the case.

Students in the sixth form value the quality of their learning and wider experiences. They feel confident about taking their next steps in education or employment because of the

strong guidance they receive and the important topics they learn about, such as money management and personal safety. They are impressively keen to contribute to the school community and are excellent role models to younger pupils.

The school has implemented a more joined-up approach across the inclusion and pastoral teams to provide pupils with the right support when they need it. Although some of this work is in the early stages, there is a clear commitment to addressing any barriers to learning pupils may have. The school's approach to identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has been strengthened. Staff are provided with useful information on how to adapt their teaching so that these pupils learn well. There is a renewed focus on supporting families and pupils to improve attendance. Pupils understand the school's expectations of their behaviour and know that the 'restorative justice' approach means they will be held responsible for their actions. Consequently, the number of suspensions is reducing.

The school's work on personal development is strong. Pupils benefit from a well-considered programme of lessons, assemblies and activities that mean they are prepared well for their future as an active member of modern British society. This is augmented by a myriad of extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities, from author visits to sporting clubs and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions. Pupils receive helpful guidance to inform their choices about their future aspirations.

The school is a community working together. Staff feel valued and know that their workload and well-being is taken into account. Parents comment positively about having their voice heard through the 'parent forums'. Leaders at all levels, including trustees, share a commitment to looking to the future with even greater ambition for the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is not consistently implemented to the same high standard within each subject area. Due to these pockets of variation, some pupils do not benefit from the same high-quality learning experience as others. Sometimes this means that pupils do not develop the depth of knowledge and understanding that they could. The school should ensure that the best practice is shared and built upon so that the quality of provision within subjects is of a consistently high standard.
- The school's strategy to support disadvantaged pupils is not having sufficient impact. Some disadvantaged pupils do not achieve the outcomes that they need to be well-prepared for the next stage in their education. This is especially the case for pupils who are persistently absent. The school should ensure that staff at all levels understand and

fulfil their roles and responsibilities in improving the outcomes and attendance of these pupils.

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	136587
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10322823
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	1551
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	276
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Guy French
CEO of the trust	James Higham
Principal	Paul Brockwell
Website	www.ashlawn.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 October 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a bilateral school, with both grammar and non-selective streams. It admits up to 30 pupils into Year 7 who have passed the Warwickshire 11+ examination and up to 30 pupils who have met the required standard in the school's modern language aptitude test.
- The headteacher has been in post since January 2023. Several senior leaders have taken up their roles since the previous graded inspection.
- The school is part of the Transforming Lives Educational Trust.
- The school uses three registered and five unregistered alternative provisions.

- 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.

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.

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- 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.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, physical education, modern foreign languages and performing arts. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions 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. They also visited lessons in other subjects, including in the sixth form.
- Inspectors met with the principal, other school leaders and staff. They also met with the CEO, other trust leaders, the chair of the trust board and a local governor.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Inspectors met with school leaders to discuss and review how they respond to behaviour incidents and pupils' attendance.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys. They considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including parents' free-text comments and correspondence sent to Ofsted during the inspection.

Inspection team

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