

# Inspection of Ercall Wood Academy

Golf Links Lane, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire TF1 2DT

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Inspection dates:	14 and 15 January 2025
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The principal of this school is Nicholas Murphy. This school is part of the Learning Community Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Jane Hughes, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Kevin Barton.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Everyone is welcome at this friendly, inclusive school. The school's culture is based around its values of 'respect, empower and aspire'. The recently introduced character development programme promotes these values. Pupils demonstrate them well. Pupils are happy at this school. They feel safe and know that staff are willing to support them whenever they need help.

The school has high expectations of all pupils. In lessons, pupils are keen to learn and achieve well.

Relationships between pupils and staff are warm. Pupils are respectful, kind and polite to each other and to visitors as they move around the site. Strong and effective pastoral care is available. This helps those who need emotional and welfare support to engage positively with the life of the school.

The school makes sure pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and healthy. There are many opportunities for pupils to take on leadership roles. This enables pupils to impact the way the school operates. For example, head students in each year group act as positive role models for other pupils. Many pupils gain important life skills and experiences through their participation in extra-curricular activities such as 'brilliant club' and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.

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

The curriculum is broad and ambitious for all pupils. It is designed to build pupils' knowledge and understanding over time. High expectations are evident across all subjects. Pupils respond well to their teachers' expectations of them. High standards of presentation in pupils' work are evident in most books, and pupils show pride in their work.

Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. The intended curriculum is delivered well. In most lessons, teachers check pupils' understanding effectively, for example through their questioning. This enables teachers to address pupils' misconceptions. However, at times, teachers do not check that pupils have understood their learning and do not intervene quickly to correct pupils' mistakes. This means pupils do not build their knowledge as securely as they could. The school has made substantial changes to the way the curriculum is implemented since the previous inspection. There is now greater clarity over precisely what pupils should learn and when they should learn it. However, previous pupils have not benefited from these changes. Published examination results do not reflect the progress current pupils are making. Pupils' outcomes are now improving.

The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified accurately. Teachers appropriately adapt their delivery of the curriculum to support pupils with SEND in learning well alongside their classmates. These pupils access the same opportunities as all other pupils. Pupils who struggle to read well are quickly

identified and benefit from effective support to help them develop into confident and fluent readers.

The school's high expectations for pupils' behaviour are understood by all. Behaviour systems are clear and are used consistently well by staff. There is very little low-level disruption in lessons. Pupils respond quickly to teachers' instructions to refocus when needed. There has been a significant reduction in suspensions this year. This reflects pupils' appreciation of the positive school culture that has been established.

Most pupils show positive attitudes to learning and engage well in lessons. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning or share their reasoning in lessons, and some do not have confidence to express their ideas orally. As a result, discussion between pupils is not as rich as it could be. This makes it more difficult for pupils to deepen their knowledge of the curriculum.

There is a well-designed personal development programme. Through this, pupils learn how to keep themselves healthy and safe and how to navigate different relationships, including online. 'Life skills' sessions and the character development programme give pupils a secure understanding of fundamental British values and the school's values. The majority of pupils successfully move on to the next stage of education, employment or training. This reflects the strength of the support and careers guidance they receive.

Many parents and carers are happy with the care and education their children receive. Parents support the improvements that have taken place over the last two years. Trust leaders, trustees and local governors work well with school leaders. They have an accurate understanding of what the school does well and any areas that need further strengthening.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The implementation of the intended curriculum is not consistently embedded across subjects and classes. As a result, pupils do not build their knowledge as well as they could. The trust should ensure that teaching strategies are implemented effectively across subjects to ensure pupils learn over time and progress as well as possible through the curriculum.
- The curriculum does not provide sufficient opportunities for sustained and meaningful discussion of what pupils have learned. This means some pupils lack confidence in discussions and do not deepen their learning or enable more creative thinking. The trust should ensure that pupils develop their oracy skills effectively to extend their ideas and deepen their learning across the curriculum.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	145707
<b>Local authority</b>	Telford & Wrekin
<b>Inspection number</b>	10344146
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	943
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Kevin Barton
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Jane Hughes
<b>Principal</b>	Nicholas Murphy
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.ercallwood.co.uk">www.ercallwood.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	8 and 9 November 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

## Information about this school

- The school is a member of the Learning Community Trust.
- The school uses nine alternative provisions for pupils. Three are registered and six are unregistered.
- 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.

- 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 the principal, other senior and middle leaders, the lead teacher for SEND and the CEO of the trust.
- The lead inspector met with members of the trustees and representatives of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects; English, mathematics, physical education, science and design and technology. For each of these subjects, inspectors met with subject leaders, carried out visits to lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors visited tutor time, reading interventions and some extra-curricular activities with leaders.
- Inspectors met with members of staff and spoke to pupils formally and informally during the inspection.
- Inspectors met with some pastoral staff and visited the areas used to support pupils during the school day.
- An inspector spoke to some of the alternative provisions used by the school.
- Inspectors looked at records and spoke to staff in relation to behaviour, bullying, attendance and safeguarding.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views 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.

### **Inspection team**

Sarah Steer, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gwen Onyon	Ofsted Inspector
Darren Bishop	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Gill	Ofsted Inspector

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